



Columbia University
in the City of New York

A Course in American Literature

For the Columbia University
Home Study Courses

By Clinton Mindil, M.A.

Instructor of English, Extension Department, Columbia University
Instructor of English, New York University

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
NEW YORK
1920

BOOKS CONTAINING THE REQUIRED READING OF THE COURSE

<i>An Introduction to American Literature</i>	Brander Matthews
<i>Pioneer Literature</i>	William P. Trent, ed.
<i>Colonial Literature</i>	William P. Trent, ed.
<i>Chief American Poets</i> (containing selections from Bryant, Poe, Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, Whitman, Lanier)	Curtis H. Page, ed.
<i>Chief American Prose Writers</i> (containing selections from Franklin, Irving, Cooper, Poe, Hawthorne, Emerson, Thoreau, Lowell, Holmes)	Norman Foerster, ed.
<i>Rules of Conduct, Farewell Address, etc.</i>	George Washington
<i>Bracebridge Hall</i> (Selections)	Washington Irving
<i>The Spy</i>	J. Fenimore Cooper
<i>The House of the Seven Gables</i>	Nathaniel Hawthorne
<i>Moby Dick</i>	Herman Melville
<i>The Hayne-Webster Debate</i>	Daniel Webster
<i>Addresses and Letters</i>	Abraham Lincoln
<i>The Oregon Trail</i>	Francis Parkman
<i>Poems and Stories</i>	Bret Harte
<i>Huckleberry Finn</i>	Mark Twain
<i>The Four Million</i>	O. Henry
<i>Atlantic Classics, 2nd Series</i>	



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FOREWORD

I. THE AIMS AND THE SCOPE OF THE COURSE

The Home Study Course in American Literature has a three-fold aim: (1) to give a general chronological survey of American books and their writers from the earliest Colonial Settlements to the present day. (2) to furnish an adequate acquaintance with the works of the most representative, significant, and influential American authors in both Poetry and Prose. (3) to trace, at least in a general way, the development of American thought and life as interpreted by its literature.

No period in the literary history of America has been omitted from consideration or unduly subordinated; but it has seemed wise to deal rather briefly with the Seventeenth and the early Eighteenth Centuries, when relatively little of literary excellence was produced, and when the national character was foreshadowed rather than formed. The Nineteenth Century, especially after the first two decades, was a period of great literary productivity in our country, so great that, in order to bring the course up to the present time, it has been necessary to omit from consideration numerous writers of no small interest and value. Pleasant and substantial, however, as the work of these minor writers may be, they must yield place to the twenty leaders of American Letters chosen here to represent the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries.

II. THE USE OF THE SYLLABUS

The Syllabus is divided into twenty assignments, each of which is intended as a unit of study. The nature of the selections to be read has prevented absolute standardization in length of assignment; but the year allowed for the completion of the course permits of various convenient distributions of the work. When the student reaches one of the more lengthy assignments, like the one on Emerson, he should take his time, and accomplish the work thoroughly, though it takes longer than the average assignment. Some regular system of study should be adopted and adhered to. No attempt should be made to cover more than one entire assignment in a single week.

Each assignment is divided, in the Syllabus, into four parts. First, the selections to be studied are named in the proper order of reading, followed by a list of recommended collateral readings. Second, the Instructor's

comments upon the material of the assignment are embodied in a few paragraphs, which aim, in a general way, to take the place of class-room discussion. Third, a list of questions to be answered in the student's Note Book is given. (See Section V.) Fourth, a list of formal questions to be answered by the student and submitted in writing to the instructor concludes each assignment. (See Section VI.)

It is particularly desirable that the student approach the selections to be read with an unbiased mind, and that he form his opinions and his judgments at first hand. To this end, it is suggested that ordinarily the required reading be completed before the comments of the Instructor or the questions are considered. Should either of these necessitate the occasional rereading of certain portions of the assignment, the additional time will be spent to advantage. In every case where the comments should precede the reading, directions are clearly given.

III. REQUIRED READING OF THE COURSE

In the study of any literature, reading the actual masterpieces of the authors is a surer path to knowledge and enjoyment than reading books or articles about these authors and their works. Practically all the required reading of the course consists, therefore, of representative selections from our chief men of letters. These selections are, for the most part, complete productions—whole poems, essays, or novels. In the few instances where abridgements are used, the passages are thoroughly representative of the entire works to which they belong. All the required readings are included in the books sent to the student by the University, with the single exception of the *Declaration of Independence*, which is assumed to be in every home.

Since the facts of a writer's life are often bound up with his literary output, a certain amount of biographical information may be considered as pre-requisite to a complete comprehension and appreciation of the works. For nearly every author considered in this course, the *Introduction to American Literature* by Professor Brander Matthews offers an adequate biographical sketch. Of those not included in this volume, the Syllabus provides an account. This biographical material should be read with as much care as any other portion of the assignment, and the author's works should be studied in the light of this knowledge.

As the required reading presents the best that has been thought and said by the chief literary spokesmen of our country, careful and thorough reading is urged. A serious attitude towards reading is in no wise inconsistent with a maximum of pleasure.

IV. COLLATERAL READING

Suggestions for collateral reading are included in each assignment in the Syllabus, but are not an integral part of the course. Generally these con-

sist of further readings in the author under consideration or writers of his school. For certain periods, works of general historical, biographical, or philosophical interest, as well as historical fiction interpreting the life of the period, are listed. The student with time to spare will find the reading of a certain number of these books helpful and interesting as he proceeds in the course; the busier one may, without regret, reserve them for a period of greater leisure. They are designed to serve as a permanent guide for those who wish to increase their familiarity with the writers of America beyond the limits of this course. No one will try, during the year through which the course extends, to read every book recommended. The endeavor has been made to list such books as may easily be procured in the average public library. Where a comparatively cheap edition is available, this is mentioned in parenthesis after the title of the book.

A few books of general interest to the entire course may be mentioned here. For those who desire an historical account of American Literature which treats the work of the minor as well as the major writers, Trent's *American Literature* (Appleton) is especially recommended as a scholarly, and, at the same time, an appreciative and readable book. Cairns' *History of American Literature* (Oxford University Press) is also a worthy discussion, as is Wendell and Greenough's *History of Literature in America* (Scribner), based on the delightfully written *Literary History of America* by the same Wendell, of staunch New England tradition. Newcomer's *American Literature* (Scott, Foresman), though briefer, possesses merit. A more detailed treatment than any of these is to be found in the *Cambridge History of American Literature* (Putnam), the work of a group of scholars. The most complete account of early American Literature is contained in Tyler's *History of American Literature During the Colonial Period* and *The Literary History of the Revolution* (Putnam). Tyler's books appeal to the specialized rather than to the general student. American Literature of recent years receives treatment in Pattee's *History of American Literature Since 1870* (Century). For most of the authors treated in this course the American Men of Letters Series (Houghton, Mifflin) provides an authoritative biography. In The Chronicles of America Series, now being published by the Yale University Press, Professor Bliss Perry's *The American Spirit in Literature* is decidedly worth reading. It is among the most recent books in the field. Other titles will be found in the bibliographies included in the text books sent to the student.

Familiarity with the outstanding facts of American history will be found of direct value to the student, who will find all the essential material in the ordinary high-school text or in T. W. Higginson's *History of the United States 986-1905* (Harpers). Such a book may be read—or reread—to advantage before the work of the course is begun.

Always, let it be repeated, the required reading is first in importance.

V. THE NOTE BOOK

The Note Book is an important part of the work of the course and should be kept strictly up to date. Its purpose is twofold; to demonstrate the student's grasp of the material as he reads it, and to serve as a ready reference during the course and after its completion. Notes should be written as a commentary upon the texts read. They must therefore be specific and detailed in their content and flexible in their form. It is almost needless to say that a loose leaf note book is the preferred type, since this permits easily of rewriting, rearrangement, revision, and addition. A system of marginal headings will be found helpful. Each assignment in the Syllabus contains a section of questions and directions for the note book, which cover adequately though not exhaustively the required reading of the assignment. All questions should be answered in complete sentence form (unless otherwise stipulated) so that the note book will be intelligible without reference to the Syllabus. Have a good supply of paper on hand; do not crowd the notes. Use none but the familiar abbreviations.

The nature of the question will generally determine the length of the answer; in cases of doubt, a line from Longfellow may serve as guide—"Better the excess than the defect." The student is of course not confined to the notes called for in the Syllabus. Any appropriate material upon either the required or the collateral reading will make the notes so much the more valuable.

As the Syllabus frequently calls for certain types of note book material a few words of definition are here given:

THE CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE gives in the form of a chart the chief dates and events in a period or in the life of an individual. For this course, its use will be chiefly biographical. It should consist of two columns—one of dates, the other of events stated as briefly as clarity will permit. Page 105 in Washington's *Rules of Conduct, etc.* serves as a model for this form of notes.

THE SUMMARY is a condensation of a piece of writing that preserves its essential thoughts and ideas while it omits as far as possible the details, the repetitions, and, usually, the illustrations that develop these thoughts and ideas in the original. It contains no literary adornment, but should possess absolute clearness, and should be written in complete sentences. Generally it does not use the words of the original though it may occasionally incorporate a topic sentence or similar quotation. The summary is ordinarily in the same tense and person as the original. It does not contain the student's comment or explanation unless the use of simpler terms may serve to explain. The ability to write a good summary is a test of one's understanding of the original.

THE OUTLINE like the summary is a condensation. It differs from the summary in that it is written in the form of topics and subtopics, by which

it indicates the structure as well as the content of the original. The topics need not be complete sentences, but they should be worded in a parallel manner. Decide first what are the main points in the passage you are outlining, take these as the major topics, and then discover what minor points fall under each heading. The use of too many major topics is a common blunder; always consider how topics may be advantageously grouped together. An outline is rarely so detailed as to require more than four different ranks of topics and subtopics. Division of a heading of any rank into subheadings necessarily implies at least two subheadings. The following is the accepted form:

- I. Major Topic.
 - A. (Minor Topic. First Rank.)
 - 1. (Minor Topic. Second Rank.)
 - a. (Minor Topic. Third Rank.)
 - b. _____
 - 2. _____
 - B. _____
- II. _____(etc.)

THE BRIEF is an outline based upon a piece of argumentative writing. Its topics are written as complete sentences, and each subtopic is a piece of evidence in support of that under which it stands. Hence each subtopic is introduced by an illative conjunction (*i.e. for, because, inasmuch as, etc.*), not by a conjunctive adverb (*i. e. so, therefore, consequently, etc.*)

THE PARAPHRASE is practically a translation of an author's words into your own words. As only complex or obscure passages require paraphrasing, its chief aim should be to elucidate and to simplify, not to condense. For every unfamiliar word, a familiar synonym is substituted, and each thought and idea should be rendered easily intelligible. The paraphrase should neglect no part of the original, and should introduce nothing not already expressed or implied therein. It is written in the same person and tense as the original.

The paraphrase is ordinarily required for a short passage of prose or verse, the summary more often for a long. The summary is adapted to novels, stories, and poems; the outline to essays and speeches, except as these, by their argumentative quality, require the brief. For a fuller discussion of summaries, outlines, and paraphrases, consult Mitchill and Carpenter's *Exposition in Classroom Practice* (Macmillan).

At any time during the course, the Instructor may require the student to submit his note book for examination.

VI. THE WRITTEN WORK OF THE COURSE

The written work is based on the five questions at the end of each assignment. Sometimes these questions are similar to ones intended for note

book development also. The plan is that the student shall submit his written work to the Instructor at the end of every second assignment, the papers to cover the questions for both assignments in the group. Thus the written work for assignments I and II will be sent together when the reading for both units has been accomplished. The questions are so worded that they may be satisfactorily answered in about two hundred words each; but the student may, if he prefers, write at greater length on one or two questions, and condense the others correspondingly. No question must be altogether omitted. It is possible, indeed, in some instances, to write one longer theme which will embody the answers to all five questions; but no theme should aim to cover more than one assignment. Thus the answers to the questions for each assignment will, combined, not greatly exceed twelve hundred words, nor should they fall much below one thousand words.

Always, the answers should be the result solely of the student's study of the texts and his personal reaction to the material that he has read. General statements should always be followed by specific details or instances selected from the reading. Comparisons or contrasts, similarly, should be supported by concrete fact.

The following directions apply to the preparation of all papers:

1. Papers should be typewritten or legibly written in ink on paper 8½ by 11 inches. For handwritten work, ruled paper is preferred.
2. A left hand margin of at least one inch should be left on every sheet. Typing should be double spaced.
3. Sheets should be arranged in order, numbered consecutively, folded lengthwise, and endorsed with the name of the student, the number of the assignment according to the Syllabus, the date of mailing, and the name of the Instructor.
4. Quotations within a paper should be clearly indicated as quotations. An appropriate brief quotation from the author under discussion is often the most desirable method of illustrating or proving a point.
5. Care should be taken to have all papers technically correct in such matters as spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Paragraph structure should be regarded, and topic sentences chosen with care.
6. As regards style, simplicity, clearness, and directness should be the aims. For these qualities the *Introduction to American Literature* may serve as a model.
7. Papers should be mailed to Mr. Clinton Mindil at the Office of Home Study Courses, Columbia University, New York City. These will be returned to the student with grades, comments, and suggestions.

VII. EXAMINATION AND CREDIT

No academic credit is given for any of the Home Study Courses. Satisfactory completion of the work of this course, however, entitles the student

to a Certificate testifying to the fact. To qualify for this Certificate, the student will be required to submit work that will be the equivalent of a final examination. The details of this will be arranged at the completion of the course.

ASSIGNMENT I

The Literature of the American Colonies

A

Required Reading: (The section in the Syllabus headed "How to approach the writers of the Colonial Period" should be read before the authors themselves.)

1. Matthews' *Introduction to American Literature*, Chapters I and II.
2. The Chroniclers: *Pioneer Literature*, Introduction, pages 1-22, 34-79, 90-119, 140-155. *Colonial Literature*, Introduction, pages 61-98, 193-204, 327-360.
3. The Divines: *Pioneer Literature*, pages 156-181, 230-270, *Colonial Literature*, pages 20-46, 215-285.
4. The Verse Makers: *Pioneer Literature*, pages 120-126, 271-287, *Colonial Literature*, pages 47-60, 111-114, 205-214.
5. Hawthorne's *May Pole of Merry Mount* (*Chief American Prose Writers*).

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Writings of the Period: Those portions of *Pioneer Literature* and *Colonial Literature* not assigned for required reading.
2. Writings Interpreting the Period:

Non-fiction:

<i>Colonial Folkways</i>	Charles M. Andrews
<i>The Fathers of New England</i>	Charles M. Andrews
<i>Customs and Fashions in Old New England</i>	A. M. Earle
<i>Home Life in Colonial Days</i>	A. M. Earle
<i>Sabbath in Puritan New England</i>	A. M. Earle
<i>Men, Women, and Manners in Colonial Times</i>	S. G. Fisher
<i>The True William Penn</i>	S. G. Fisher
<i>Beginnings of New England</i>	John Fiske
<i>Dutch and Quaker Colonies in America</i>	John Fiske
<i>Old Virginia and Her Neighbors</i>	John Fiske
<i>Pioneers of the Old South</i>	Mary Johnston
<i>Life of Captain John Smith</i>	W. G. Simms
<i>Ten New England Leaders</i>	W. Walker

<i>The First Settlement of New Eng-</i>	
<i>land</i>	Daniel Webster
<i>Cotton Mather</i>	Barrett Wendell
Fiction:	
<i>Standish of Standish</i>	Jane Austin
<i>The Gray Champion, Legends of</i>	
<i>the Province House, Endicott and</i>	
<i>the Red Cross (in Twice Told Tales)</i>	Nathaniel Hawthorne
<i>To Have and to Hold</i>	Mary Johnston

In English Literature selections from Hakluyt's *Voyages*, Taylor's *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, and Herbert's *The Temple* may serve as parallel readings for the Chroniclers, the Divines, and the Verse Makers respectively.

B

HOW TO APPROACH THE WRITERS OF THE COLONIAL PERIOD: The student must not expect to find a literary treat in the writings of the early colonists. They were men of deeds rather than men of letters. They had statistics to tell or ideas to expound, but they were singularly unhampered by those artistic niceties which now characterize the most modest efforts in narrative and exposition. It should not be forgotten, however, that even in England, at the period of the early Colonial Settlements, prose writings had not reached the degree of beauty and flexibility that they were later to attain. On both sides of the Atlantic, the English language frequently proved a cumbersome vehicle for expressing thought.

To derive pleasure, then, from the writings of this period, the student must allow his sympathetic imagination free play. He must endeavor to supply the background as he reads; he must interweave with the bare, yet frequently prolix, statement of fact gleams of his own fancy. If the account be full of tiresome details, he must rescue from their midst the one item that is fraught with human interest. If the passage be overburdened with the exhortations of a now outworn theology, he must endeavor through them to obtain a peep into the minds of his forefathers. If the verse be halting or harsh, he must remember that it was sometimes composed to the rhythm of the backwoodsman's axe.

Of course this attitude should not be carried to an extreme; the student must be careful not to assign to a writer excellences, the existence of which is solely imaginary. Let it be repeated that few of the Colonists regarded themselves as literary men. The printed page was to them a means rather than an end. They sought not to practice an art, but to give their readers information concerning this life and the life to come. If we take them, then, at their own valuation, we shall find that the intellectual interest in reading them is greater than the aesthetic. They interpret American life and thought and American character of three centuries ago, a life in which thought did

not reach to the conception of a new nationality, but in which the elements of what we regard as permanently American in character were from the first acting and reacting. For the purpose of convenience, we shall consider the writers of the period under three heads: (1) The Chroniclers, who represent the strain of adventure that has always been a trait of true Americanism; (2) The Divines, who indicate the high moral purpose that has similarly characterized our history; (3) The Verse Makers, who stand, however cruelly, for the aspiration towards constructive beauty, which their descendants have never lost.

THE CHRONICLERS—1608-1705. The writings of the early American Chroniclers are not entirely without intrinsic interest to the modern reader. However fashions and forms may change, the struggles between man and nature and between man and man are perennially interesting, and afford dramatic situations which the most unskilled pens cannot altogether spoil. In the selections that cover the first century of American colonization, the stress upon these struggles is the element that unites writers of the most varied purposes and personalities.

JOHN SMITH: Perhaps Capt. Smith may claim the distinction of being the least literary of the group. Notice that his account is matter-of-fact, altogether practical, and unadorned. You look in vain for beauty of style in his narrative passages or in his essay in praise of Colonial opportunities. Yet his writings abound in items of human interest. You find an out-of-doors freshness about the passage just named, a simple sincerity in the one on *Glorious Pains*. Observe in particular how casually he relates the Pocohontas incident, an incident that, under more romantic treatment, has given us one of our national traditions.

WILLIAM BRADFORD: The pious narratives of Governor Bradford show similarly that these early experiences of the New England colonists seemed far less picturesque to them than they do to their descendants. The section headed *The Departure of the Pilgrims* and that on *Early Difficulties of the Pilgrim Fathers* and the extract from *Mourt's Relation* will suffice for illustration. Still greater interest attaches to the account of Morton and the Merry Mount. The conflict between the stern religionists and the "lord of misrule" offers a dramatic situation that the discerning reader will not permit to escape. Bradford apologizes for being so "long about so unworthy a person"; but do you not wish that he had given us still fuller details?

THOMAS MORTON: Fortunately, Bradford's account is supplemented by Morton's own narrative of the settlement at Merry Mount. When contrasted with the prevalent writings of the time, Morton's pages seem almost racy. At any rate, they make a bold attempt, however ineffective, to be satirically humorous. You should compare carefully these two parallel accounts, and from them endeavor to reconstruct in your fancy the spirit of the time and the place. Then read Hawthorne's story *The Maypole at Merry Mount*

and enjoy the situation over again through the imagination of the great romancer.

JOHN WINTHROP: From Governor Winthrop you obtain a rather intimate view of early New England life. His accounts are presented with the informality of conversation. There is a certain austerity in the passage on Liberty, but here, as in the correspondence that follows, we can never forget that there is a personality of value behind the rigid style.

JOHN MASON: Note the practical wisdom and the piety displayed in these selections. Observe again the matter-of-fact manner in which this soldier tells his deeds and experiences.

JOHN JOSSELYN: Unlike the men whom we have considered up to this time, Josselyn was not a leader or even an active participant in Colonial activities. Though he resided in America for a period of years, he remained in spirit a sojourner. He is more concerned with the novel experience than with the typical, more interested in the strange than the natural. His works are readable, especially in extracts. Notice that there is a certain superficiality about his writings, an absence of interpretive comment on what he relates. Upon this point, compare him with one of the previous authors, with Winthrop or Mason, or with Mrs. Rowlandson, who follows him.

MARY ROWLANDSON: There is a deeper emotional note in the narrative of this woman than has appeared in any of the foregoing selections. Note the clear, poignant picture of Colonial hardships and perils. It is a striking fact that despite the feeling she infuses into the narrative, Mrs. Rowlandson considers all her experiences as a piece of the day's work, does not exaggerate, does not sentimentalize. She is as matter-of-fact as Bradford or Mason.

ROBERT BEVERLY: Beverly's history carries us back again to Virginia, the locality of Smith's adventures. Smith is at his best an annalist; Beverly may not improperly be called an historian. He had leisure and opportunity for contemplation. He saw events against a background; Smith could see but the events.

SARAH KEMBLE KNIGHT: When you reach the chatty, vivacious sketches of Mrs. Knight, you have left primitive ground entirely. Her journals interest not only by what they tell but by their style as well. Though included in this section, the school-mistress was not, properly speaking, one of the *early* chroniclers. She was more urbane and less earnest; she observed more than she experienced. Her writings show that a strip of civilization had begun to separate the ocean from the frontier. It is more than chance that her journals carry us into the Eighteenth Century.

The Americanism of the Chroniclers: The early settlers reveal, not in elusive myths and legends, but in practical, straightforward accounts, often in letters and diaries, the origins of our nation. They do not, like primitive literatures, create a supernatural hero to stand as the national ideal, but they set forth artlessly and more or less unconsciously those heroic qualities which, dispersed through communities, have made possible

the American advance from the Atlantic seaboard to the Pacific, until the frontier within our border has ceased to exist. Sturdiness, resourcefulness, curiosity, cheerfulness in the face of hardship, willingness to work and occasionally to play, a certain restlessness, dissatisfaction with the achievements of the past, democracy—these are the outstanding qualities that the interpreter of records detects in the writers presented in this section, qualities, derived largely from Anglo-Saxon stock, which may be traced through the various stages of our history as a nation.

THE DIVINES—1630-1724. Since the New England Colonies were established largely for religious purposes, it is not surprising that many of their writings are religious or theological in character. In the chroniclers of the Seventeenth Century (with the exception of the notorious Morton), it is impossible to read many pages without finding frequent expressions of piety and spiritual earnestness. The poets, even more strikingly, are practically all sacred poets. Side by side with these grew up a body of doctrinal literature from the pens of professional clergymen, expounding the dominant theology of the day—Calvinism. The selections from Cotton, Shepard, and the Mathers are sufficient to indicate the characteristics of this religion: on the favorable side, resolution and self-discipline; on the unfavorable side, gloom, intolerance, and sometimes cruelty. The keen intellectuality and the trained erudition of the typical New England clergyman, and the reverence with which the community regarded him, should always be kept in mind.

JOHN COTTON: Cotton's chief interest appears to have been the explanation of Holy Writ to his contemporaries. It is significant that he takes for granted a universal interest in the matters he discusses. You do not find any exhortation to meditate on religion or to lay less stress on worldly affairs. Probably he knew of none who needed such exhortation, since his works belong to the early period of the New England Settlements. His protests are not against the irreligious but against the heretically religious, his intolerance and defense of persecution being thoroughly typical of the Calvinistic mood. His controversy with Roger Williams reveals the temper of the times.

THOMAS SHEPARD: Like Cotton, Shepard was interested solely in the concerns of religion and assumed everyone else to be. He of course recognized that there were sinners, and he deals with them in *The Sincere Convert* (See section entitled *The Fate of the Evil Soul*). This passage is illustrative of the gloomy side of the Calvinistic tenets and sounds the note of warning so characteristic of the later divines. In the selection from *Meditations and Spiritual Experiences* we are afforded an interesting glimpse into the mind of Thomas Shepard.

NATHANIEL WARD: Ward is the most readable, the most modern in expression if not in thought, of the divines included in this section. The selections assigned for reading are not doctrinal or theological; yet none

but a Calvinist could have written the passage *Against Toleration* or that on *A Wise State*. His comment on the Irish is another example of his far-reaching intolerance. Cotton, we have noticed, apparently did not regard the possibility of worldliness as a menace in his community. To Ward interest in dress meant the beginning of this menace. His essay *Concerning Women's Fashions* strikes us today as amusing; but genuine bitterness lies beneath his satire. Note the scope of his vocabulary in this essay. Do you think that all of Ward's reading was done in the Scriptures?

JOHN ELIOT: Eliot illustrates the practical side of religion more than the theoretical. He was primarily a missionary. Note the consequent simplicity of his narrative and exposition, as in the letter to Shepard.

THE MATHERS: Just as Mrs. Knight's journals reveal a spirit absent in the early annalists, so do the numerous writings of Increase and Cotton Mather represent an altered state of society. Not only had primitiveness started to give way before civilization by the end of the Seventeenth Century, but with increasing prosperity there had entered more liberal and less exacting ideas concerning religion. The minister was losing some of his prestige as a leader of the community and the merchant was rising to greater prominence. The divines, in consequence, could no longer disregard the menace of worldliness. Scriptural exposition is superseded by exhortation in their writings. Increase Mather's *The Greatest Sinners Exhorted and Encouraged to Come to Christ* (*Colonial Literature*, p. 220) and Cotton Mather's *The Bostonian Ebenezer* (*Colonial Literature*, p. 247) serve as examples of this tendency. They also show that Calvinism had lost none of its gloom and harshness, qualities which had inevitably brought about the liberal reaction against which the upholders of the old school thundered.

The accounts of the witchcraft trials related by the Mathers, included in this section, are probably fuller of human interest than anything else of this period outside the chronicles. They show, at the same time, the lengths to which Puritanical intolerance could go. Cotton Mather appears in a more genial mood as an historian in the *Magnalia* (See pp. 254 ff.) and as an essayist in his *Essays to do Good* (See pp. 269 ff.). Though unattractive to most modern readers, his writings have austere grace and a clarity that the student should not fail to notice.

The Americanism of the Divines: Our country has largely outgrown the narrowness and the intolerance that we find in the Seventeenth Century Divines. The liberal tendencies that the Mathers opposed are those that have survived. For this reason it is not so easy to connect the characteristics of this group with our modern conception of Americanism as it was to trace the continued influence of the spirit of the chroniclers. Yet the rigidity, the sternness, the insistence upon duty of the Colonial preachers left a mark upon the national character that has outlasted the theology on which they were based, and has done its part in steeling the people to meet the various crises that have arisen in our national life. Nor have the intellectual stand-

ards of the early divines and the consequent intellectual requirements they placed on their congregations been without their effect upon the educational development of this country.

THE VERSE MAKERS—1640-1677. The student of early American Literature is struck by the scarcity of efforts in rhyme that attain the slightest degree of excellence. So lacking in poetical quality are the majority of the selections here offered that they might almost be considered simply as one form of the theological writings of the century. Several of the divines already considered occasionally lapsed into very similar verse.

THE BAY PSALM BOOK: We are interested historically in this book because of the circumstances of its publication. (See *Pioneer Literature*, p. 120.) We take an intellectual interest in the Preface, a portion of which is quoted in the selections. But when we read the Psalms themselves, we are interested only in observing how badly they are done. The student should compare with these versions the corresponding Psalms in the King James Bible. Note that the selection on page 122, headed Psalm XXIII, is in reality Psalm XXIV.

ANNE BRADSTREET: Though she scarcely measures up to modern standards of excellence, Mrs. Bradstreet had a more nearly poetic inspiration than any of the other Seventeenth Century versemakers with the possible exception of Oakes.

MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH: This poet, of unforgettable name, represents even more strikingly than any of the divines whom we have previously considered, the tragic gloom of Calvinistic theology. Have you ever read anything that, for logical pessimism, surpasses the stanzas on *Dooming the Reprobate Infant*? The metrical harshness and monotony of the lines you will hardly fail to observe.

PETER FOLGER: Folger is included in these selections because he deserves mention as Franklin's grandfather, and because his poem, quite devoid of intrinsic merit, introduces the Quaker spirit. He even remotely suggests some of the pacifistic lyrics occasioned by the recent war.

URIAN OAKES: In reading the elegy on Shepard, observe the manifest sincerity of emotion. There is also an occasional felicity of phrase that distinguishes this poem from the other elegies and epitaphs of the period.

The Americanism of the Verse Makers: The verse makers of the Seventeenth Century contributed nothing to the Americanism of their day or of ours that has not already been mentioned in connection with the divines.

The selections in this section carry the student into the Eighteenth Century. During the first half of this century, little was done in a literary way that requires special attention in this course. Political issues were gradually becoming more prominent, and religion continued its war on worldliness. The tendencies of these years culminated in the work of the men whom we shall consider in the next assignment.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Write a summary of Chapter I of *An Introduction to American Literature*.
2. Define: English Literature, American Literature, British Literature.
3. Make an outline of Chapter II of *An Introduction to American Literature*. (Decide what paragraphs can be grouped to form a major topic. You will find that this chapter contains five or six major topics altogether, under each of which belong from two to six minor topics.)
4. In *Pioneer Literature* and *Colonial Literature* you will find prefixed to the selections from each writer, a brief biographical note. From the information in these passages make a chart of the nineteen authors considered in this assignment, in the following manner. Arrange the authors chronologically according to their dates of birth. In five separate columns, give after the name of each writer the date of birth, date of death, titles of important published works, date of publication of each, and the name of the Colony to which the writer belonged. Insert the *Bay Psalm Book* in its proper place.
5. Rewrite in your own words Smith's account of Pocahontas.
6. From the writings of Bradford select half a dozen sentences that illustrate his piety.
7. From the Writings of Morton select half a dozen sentences that illustrate his reverence.
8. What impression of the political interests of the New Englanders do you derive from Winthrop's account of the election?
9. Why does the reader of Mason's accounts need imaginative insight?
10. Why does Josselyn lack the earnestness of most of these writers?
11. How does Josselyn's credulity differ from Winthrop's? (See *Items from Winthrop's History*, pp. 99 ff.)
12. Write a summary of Mrs. Rowlandson's experiences.
13. Ascertain the meaning of the term *Blue Stocking*. Would one be correct in calling Mrs. Knight a colonial Blue Stocking? Justify your answer.
14. Select half a dozen sentences from her writings that indicate a spirit of worldliness.
15. In what respects does Beverly's *Pastimes of Colonial Virginia* resemble Smith's *Colonial Opportunities*? In what do they differ? Consider both style and subject matter.
16. Comment upon the subject matter of Cotton's writings. Would the title *Scriptural Expositions* cover all the selections?
17. What phase of Calvinism is represented in Shepard's *Fate of the Evil Soul*?
18. What phase of Calvinism is represented by Nathaniel Ward?
19. Make a list of peculiar words found in Ward's writings. Pick out some coined words.
20. Was Eliot an optimist or a pessimist? In this connection compare the title of his chief work with other titles of the period.
21. Was Eliot a practical or a theoretical divine? Explain.
22. What phase of Calvinism do the Mathers represent?
23. Select half a dozen sentences from Increase Mather that illustrate his opposition to worldliness.
24. Cotton Mather displays different traits of character in his writings on witchcraft from those displayed in his *Essays to Do Good*. What are the traits of character indicated?
25. Select half a dozen sentences from Cotton Mather that show the intellectual quality of his style.
26. Write a paraphrase of the extract from the Preface of the *Bay Psalm Book*.
27. Write a paraphrase of Mrs. Bradstreet's *Prologue*. Who is Bartas mentioned in these lines? Do these lines contain any expressions that can be called graceful?
28. Who is Spenser mentioned on p. 278? What influence had his writings on Mrs. Bradstreet?
29. State in your own words the underlying idea of *Contemplations*.
30. Select half a dozen expressions from this poem that are pleasingly worded or suggest pleasing images.
31. In her metrical effects is Mrs. Bradstreet smooth or rough? Explain.
32. How does Michael Wigglesworth differ from her in this respect?
33. Give in your own words the line of reasoning in *Dooming the Reprobate Infant*.
34. Ascertain the precise meaning of the word *elegy*, and write a definition of it in your own words.
35. Select half a dozen pleasing expressions from Oakes' elegy.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Do the following passages strike you as humorous? Is the humor intentional or unintentional? Explain your reasons, making reference to the passages themselves:
Pioneer Literature: pp. 73-79, 99-105, 260-266.
 2. From the selections you have read, compare the characters of Mary Rowlandson and Sarah Kemble Knight.
 3. Through the six divines considered in this assignment trace the development of (1) the spirit of gloom, (2) intolerance, (3) opposition to worldliness.
 4. What qualities of verse form, language, and imaginative power do you find in Wigglesworth? In Mrs. Bradstreet? In Oakes? Compare Wigglesworth's subject matter with Mrs. Bradstreet's.
 5. Which of the Seventeenth Century writers here considered strikes you as being the most typically American? Why?
- In addition to the foregoing, submit an outline of Smith's *Colonial Opportunities* (pp. 9-11), a summary of the same passage, and a copy of one of the paraphrases written in the note book. These will be criticized for form and method.

ASSIGNMENT II

The Literature of the Revolutionary Period

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. III.
(See also p. 205 for Jefferson)
2. *Chief American Prose Writers*, pp. 1-37.
3. *Washington's Rules of Conduct, etc.* entire volume.
4. *The Declaration of Independence*

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Writings of the Period:

<i>Arthur Mervyn</i>	Charles B. Brown
<i>Selected Sermons</i>	Jonathan Edwards
(Macmillan Pocket Classics)	
<i>Selected Poems</i>	Philip Freneau
(See Stedman's <i>American Anthology</i>)	
<i>Poor Richard's Almanac</i>	Benjamin Franklin
Selections from the <i>Federalist</i>	Alexander Hamilton
<i>Letters and Addresses</i>	Thomas Jefferson
(Unit Book Publishing Co.—one of the few single volumes of selections from Jefferson)	
Selections from <i>Common Sense</i> and <i>The Crisis</i>	Thomas Paine
The Constitution of the United States	

2. Writings Interpreting the Period:

Non-fiction:

<i>The Life of John Marshall</i>	A. J. Beveridge
<i>Paul Jones, Founder of the American</i> <i>Navy</i>	A. C. Buell
<i>John Marshall and the Constitution</i>	E. S. Corwin
<i>The True Thomas Jefferson</i>	W. E. Curtis
<i>Beginners of a Nation</i>	E. Eggleston
<i>The Fathers of the Constitution</i>	M. Farrand
<i>The True Benjamin Franklin</i>	S. G. Fisher
<i>The American Revolution</i>	John Fiske
<i>The Critical Period of American History</i>	John Fiske
<i>The True George Washington</i>	P. L. Ford
<i>Samuel Adams</i>	J. K. Hosmer
<i>Alexander Hamilton</i>	H. C. Lodge
<i>Founders of the American Republic</i>	C. Mackay
<i>John Adams</i>	J. T. Morse
<i>John Jay</i>	G. Pellen
<i>The Character of Washington</i>	Daniel Webster
<i>Eulogy on Adams and Jefferson</i>	Daniel Webster

Fiction:

<i>The Bow of Orange Ribbon</i>	Amelia Barr
<i>Janice Meredith</i>	P. L. Ford
<i>Hugh Wynne—Free Quaker</i>	S. W. Mitchell

Suggested reading in English Literature—Writings of the period: *Political Justice* (Wm. Godwin), *Autobiography* (Edw. Gibbon), *Speech on Conciliation with America* (Edmund Burke); writings interpreting the period: *The Virginians* (Wm. M. Thackeray), *Brother Squaretoes* and *A Priest in Spite of Himself in Rewards and Fairies* (R. Kipling).

B

The writers of the period of the Revolution and of the years immediately preceding the conflict were directly influenced by the political situation in the Colonies. The literature which they produced was for the most part serious in nature; but its seriousness differed vastly from that of the previous century. A great deal of it was controversial, and controversy finds rhetoric an effective weapon. It was an era of much public speaking, and oratory gains power through rhetoric. It was both an intellectual and a prosaic age, and rhetoric is a natural accompaniment of intellectualized prose. An outstanding characteristic, then, of the writings and the speeches of this period is their rhetorical quality. In some writers it is so unrestrained as to result in mere sensationalism; in others it is effective and dignified.

This tendency toward rhetorical display only increased with the Revolution. The State papers, the official and semi-official documents, the public utterances of a new nation must maintain a high degree of excellence lest a lapse from literary standards lower its prestige and evoke a smile. The Commonwealth of England found in Milton one who could cope with the Latinity of the Continent; America found in Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, and Hamilton writers who could stand comparison with England's best.

The lives and achievements of these men are so well known to every American that they require no further introduction. They were not, of course, men of letters in the sense of being professional writers; but they all had a sufficient amount of literary training and literary ability to make their works still of interest and value aside from the reputation they won in other fields. Since the Eighteenth Century, both in England and in America, was notable for intellectual achievement rather than for freedom of emotion, the student must expect to find in these writers such qualities as worldly wisdom, urbanity, satire and epigram, in greater measure than sympathy, warmth, or geniality of humor.

Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson as Men of Letters: Although the complete collected works of these men fill many large volumes, their literary reputations are based on a very small proportion of what they wrote. The *Autobiography*, *Poor Richard's Almanac*, and a few of his lighter essays are all that now make Franklin remembered as an author. Washington's literary fame rests almost solely on his *Farewell to the Army* and his *Farewell Address to the People of the United States*. The *Farewell Address*, to be sure, is in some measure a collaboration. Critics are not agreed to what extent its stylistic excellence may be due to Hamilton, its statesmanship to Jay and Madison. But while they have been debating the matter, the speech itself has become firmly established in the minds and affections of Americans as Washington's great message to his country. Nor is literary excellence wanting in his undisputed writings, as the volume assigned for study clearly shows. Jefferson, likewise, is to many readers of today the author of a single document, *The Declaration of Independence*. But he who investigates will discover many passages of literary excellence and substantial content in the public addresses and the private letters of our third president. Further reading in the works of these three American patriots and statesmen is most heartily recommended.

CERTAIN OTHER AMERICAN AUTHORS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY should be known by name to the student of American Literature, though the limits of the course prevent detailed examination of their works. Among the writers who attained no small degree of prominence and excellence during these years are the following:

JONATHAN EDWARDS (1702-1758): A divine who followed the Calvinistic tradition, and is generally regarded as the greatest of the long line of Colonial

preachers. He was at the head of a Calvinistic revival toward the middle of the century, known as the Great Awakening. His best known sermon is *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, a vigorous and rhetorical piece of pulpit oratory.

JOHN WOOLMAN (1720-1772): A Quaker preacher, best known for his *Journal*, which contains one of the earliest written protests by an American against slavery.

PHILIP FRENEAU (1752-1832): A poet of considerable skill and merit. He was one of the earliest writers in verse to realize the literary value of what was close at hand. Native flowers, native birds, and native lore appear in his poem. He also wrote patriotic poems inspired by the Revolution.

THOMAS PAINE (1737-1809): An Englishman by birth living in Pennsylvania, who contributed to the Colonial cause two of its most influential pamphlets: *The Crisis* and *Common Sense*. Paine is noted for his fiery eloquence.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON (1757-1804): Author of many political writings, the best of which is *The Federalist* a series of papers that won many supporters for the Constitution, then being considered.

THE "HARTFORD WITS": Who for a brief period after the close of the Revolutionary War, made Connecticut the literary center of the nation, as Massachusetts had been and was later to be again. Of the group of writers who composed the Hartford Wits, the following deserve individual mention: JOHN TRUMBULL (1750-1831), who wrote the satirical poem *McFingal*; TIMOTHY DWIGHT (1752-1817), who essayed a scriptural epic poem entitled *The Conquest of Canaan*; and JOEL BARLOW (1754-1812), whose serious effort, a national epic entitled *The Columbiad* is less interesting to the modern reader than his verses on *Hasty Pudding*. Barlow's patriotic motives deserve more credit than his poetic ability. The fact that he hints, in the last book of his *Columbiad*, at a league of nations is not likely to cause a revival of interest in his work.

CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN (1771-1810): the first American novelist of genuine significance, whose *Wieland* and *Arthur Mervyn* have somewhat feebly survived their author to the present day. Brown is the chief figure in a group of writers who, for a brief period at the opening of the Nineteenth Century, transferred the literary center of the country to Philadelphia. *Arthur Mervyn* contains an interesting picture of the Philadelphia of 1793.

The Americanism of the Revolutionary Writers: In Franklin we find represented the quality of practical shrewdness and astuteness that has remained one phase of the American character to the present day. And no one since Franklin has surpassed his embodiment of that trait. The contribution of Washington and Jefferson to the formation of American ideals is too well known to require discussion here. All three, Franklin, in private and public life, the others more particularly in public life, represented the tendency of the age towards secularization. The interest in politics and in

commerce, in society and in philosophy had relegated religion to a far less important place than it had held in the Seventeenth Century. Similarly, the amenities of social life had replaced to some extent and in certain localities the roughness of pioneer existence. But the frontier was still close at hand, and the qualities that originated in frontier life were kept alive by the eight years of war. The greatest change, however, brought by the Eighteenth Century was the development of a Colonial spirit into a National. This feeling of a distinct and separate nationality introduced an attitude of self-sufficiency not altogether absent from the earlier period, but never until the middle of the Eighteenth Century finding articulate utterance.

Until the Revolution all American writers had looked to England for literary models. We have seen how Franklin imitated Addison, how before him Mrs. Bradstreet had echoed the British poets. In fact, so universal was this attitude that there is scarcely an image taken from the American landscape before Freneau. The writers at the end of the century stood for a new order of things. Men like Freneau, Barlow, and to some extent Brown, sought consciously to break away from European domination, to set their scenes in America and derive their inspiration from this side of the Atlantic. They were by no means wholly successful in this attempt, but they did a valuable service in clearing the way for the distinctly national literature of the Nineteenth Century.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Franklin's life.
2. Trace briefly the events of American history that took place during his lifetime.
3. What led Franklin to write his *Autobiography*? (Consult the opening paragraphs.)
4. Write a character sketch of Franklin. Derive your material from the *Autobiography* and Prof. Matthews' account. (Note that the character sketch is not the story of a man's life, but a delineation of his qualities. Events are used only to illustrate characteristics. The thirteenth paragraph of the *Autobiography* is a good example of this form of writing.)
5. What were some of Franklin's favorite books?
6. How did he teach himself to write?
7. Narrate in your own words the incident of Franklin's arrival in Philadelphia.
8. Who was Keimer? What part did he play in Franklin's life?
9. Of what literary society did Franklin become a member? What were the activities of these young men?
10. What trick did Governor Keith play on Franklin?
11. Franklin's style possesses more ease and flexibility than that of any American writers before him. How do you account for this?
12. Is his style simple or ornate? Select several sentences as evidence.
13. Is his style rhetorical? Select several sentences as evidence.
14. Did Franklin detect in events the hand of God or the hand of man? Contrast his viewpoint with that of John Winthrop and Cotton Mather.
15. Select half a dozen sentences that exemplify Franklin's shrewdness and practical wisdom.
16. Read an encyclopedia account of Washington. From this make a chronological table of his life. Compare it with the one in your book.
17. Tell in your own words how Washington accomplished the *Dangerous Errand*.

18. What facts regarding the state of the American army does Washington tell in his communication to the President of Congress? (p. 50.)
19. What was the significance of the *Mr. Washington or General Washington* episode?
20. There is a tendency toward moderateness of expression in the account of Valley Forge. Does this prevent a forcible presentation of the facts and a display of genuine feeling? Does his manner of writing here indicate his aristocratic breeding? How?
21. How does *emotion* differ from *emotionalism*? Which do you find in the *Farewell to the Army*?
22. Write a summary of this passage.
23. You find the literary qualities of directness and clarity in the writings of Washington. You also find a certain formality of phraseology. Select passages illustrative of these qualities.
24. The more intimate writings show urbanity and courtesy of expression. There is evidence that by both birth and training Washington was a thorough gentleman. Cite passages.
25. What are the eight *main* contentions of the *Farewell Address*? Select these with care, grouping the minor points.
26. Make an outline of the *Address* based on these eight points.
27. To what extent is this speech rhetorical? Cite passages. Does this quality interfere with its sincerity?
28. Are Washington's arguments logical? Analyze one of them; then paraphrase it.
29. Are any parts of the *Address* now obsolete? Cite instances. Do these portions lessen the value of the speech from the literary point of view? From the political point of view?
30. Do you think that the ideals of Americanism proclaimed by Washington are great enough to transcend the differences between his days and ours? Explain.
31. Read an encyclopedia account of Thomas Jefferson. Make a chronological table of his life.
32. Read aloud the two opening paragraphs of the *Declaration*. They are characterized by impressiveness of tone, dignity, and forcefulness. Select several expressions illustrative of these qualities.
33. Has the *Declaration of Independence* power to move the modern reader? What is your personal reaction?
34. Test the *Declaration* intellectually also. Are the arguments sound?
35. Write a summary of the *Declaration*.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. What are your impressions of Franklin as a man, derived from the reading of his *Autobiography*?
2. Point out the chief characteristics of Franklin's style. Compare it with that of some earlier writer.
3. To what extent is Washington's *Farewell Address* significant in our own day? Why?
4. Do you consider Franklin or Washington the more typically American in his writings? Why?
5. Explain and illustrate the statement that the *Declaration of Independence* "combines compact logic and brilliant rhetoric."

ASSIGNMENT III

Washington Irving

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. IV.
2. *Chief American Prose Writers*, pp. 38-94.
3. *Bracebridge Hall* (Selections) entire.

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Works by Irving:

The Knickerbocker History of New York (complete)

A Tour of the Prairies

The Alhambra (Macmillan Pocket Classics)

Tales of a Traveller (Eclectic English Classics, American Book Co.)

2. Works Interpreting the Period:

Washington Irving C. D. Warner

Literary Life of James K. Paulding W. I. Paulding

Last Days of Knickerbocker Life in New York A. C. Dayton

Old New York H. C. Brown

3. Essayists of the Irving Tradition:

Dream Life D. G. Mitchell

Reveries of a Bachelor D. G. Mitchell

Prue and I G. W. Curtis

(Macmillan's Pocket Classics)

Suggested reading in English Literature: Selections from the *Essays* of Addison and Steele (especially the *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*); Lamb's *Essays of Elia*; and selections from the *Essays* of Leigh Hunt. Thackeray's essay *Nil Nisi Bonum* in *Roundabout Papers*.

B

To be appreciated, Irving must be approached in the proper spirit. He was a man of unusual leisure in an age that was more leisurely than ours, and his writings reflect the calm placidity of his life and his surroundings. He is never in haste, nor must his reader be.

The selections assigned for required reading do not represent all the different fields that Irving treated. For this reason, the student is particularly urged to read portions of the recommended reading. It will be observed, however, that whether Irving deals with American material, or English, or Spanish, his methods, his style, and the leisurely flow of his work remain the same.

It is always to be kept in mind that Irving was one of the first writers of our new nation to regard England with affection, to recognize, after the heat of conflict, that still "ours are the old traditions of the Saxon and of Celt", and to endeavor to bring the two countries into greater harmony. His imaginative temperament, delighting in old tales, old customs, and old manners, particularly fitted him for the task.

Gratifying is the additional fact that the fascination of the Old World never blinded Irving to the possibilities of the New. The western world, too, had its traditions and its memories, and these he utilized to the fullest

extent. Such a book as his *History of New York* and such stories as *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* are important contributions to the foundation of national culture. No attempt need be made here scientifically to explain the word "culture". Suffice it to say, culture, however defined, cannot exist without a past. It is essentially a superstructure, and requires a substantial foundation. With unerring discrimination, Irving succeeded in establishing new connections with what had gone before. Had he written merely for the erudite, his influence would have been slight, but he made also an appeal to the popular imagination. All who read his works began to mingle with their aspirations for the future a more romantic affection for the past. They had pioneer work to do, but they had also a tradition to carry on. Local legends led them to think more often and more appreciatively of their environments; they furnished a stimulus for imaginative and intellectual development; in a word their function was cultural.

Irving's Americanism: Irving's contribution to Americanism has already been suggested. It is three-fold; he interpreted America and Americans to the English; he interpreted Europe, and especially England, to his countrymen; he sought literary material and found literary inspiration in American landscape and in native lore, and thus contributed to American culture. He helped (though others were to complete the task) to rid American Literature of subservience to European Models, and at the same time to rid it of an equally pernicious attitude of hostility towards everything across the sea. From another point of view, he was influential in establishing the literary center of this country in New York, and furnished the name for the group of New York writers known as the Knickerbocker Group. In this Cooper and Bryant, along with Irving, are the leaders.

FOLLOWERS OF IRVING: Modern life is not favorable to the production of such literature as Irving wrote. The element of leisure has departed. During the Nineteenth Century, however, a group of personal essayists continued the Irving tradition. Two who stand out by reason of their excellence are Donald G. Mitchell, better known as IK MARVEL (1822-1908), whose volumes *Reveries of a Bachelor* and *Dream Life* afford pleasurable reading, and GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS (1824-1892), whose *Lotus Eating* and *Prue and I* are equally charming.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Irving's life.
2. Why did Irving receive the name Washington?
3. What was the condition of New York during Irving's boyhood?
4. Tell the story of Irving's love affair.
5. How was Irving qualified to write of England and Spain?
6. Was Irving's life a happy one? Explain.
7. What was Irving's purpose in writing the *Knickerbocker History of New York*? What was its reception?
8. If you were to read the *History* without knowing the circumstances of its composition, should you take it as a serious account? Why, or why not?

9. To what extent is the *History* a burlesque? (*Burlesque*: an imitation of a serious piece of writing that distorts and exaggerates with the purpose of creating a humorous effect.)

10. Why does Irving introduce "epic similes" into the *History*? (*Epic Simile*: A lengthy elaborately detailed comparison of the sort used by Homer, Virgil, and other epic poets. For a burlesque epic simile, see the first paragraph of *Peter the Headstrong*.)

11. Is Irving's satire gentle or biting? Give examples.

12. Has Irving the ability to make his characters seem real? Cite instances.

13. Write a character sketch of Peter Stuyvesant based on this passage.

14. What local allusions does the passage contain that would make it particularly enjoyable to a New Yorker?

15. In what way does a book of this sort contribute to culture? (See Syllabus, III., B.)

16. Write a summary of *The Author's Account of Himself*.

17. Does this essay lead you to think that Irving possessed a poetic imagination? Why?

18. Do you detect the atmosphere of leisure in *Westminster Abbey*? Explain.

19. Does Irving describe the Abbey in general or in specific terms? Illustrate.

20. Would this essay make an Englishman of the day feel more friendly toward America?

21. Would this essay make an American of the day feel more kindly towards the English?

22. How does *Christmas Eve* illustrate Irving's fondness for the past?

23. How does it illustrate his affection for England?

24. Does Irving appear in this essay as a lover of human nature? How?

25. By what means does Irving create a vivid picture of the festivities?

26. How would Franklin have dealt with the same material?

27. Write a brief summary of *Rip Van Winkle*.

28. Write a character sketch of Rip.

29. Was Irving tolerant of human weaknesses and foibles? Cite instances.

30. Is Irving's method of telling a story leisurely? Explain.

31. Do you detect a mellow quality in his works? Explain.

32. How did Thackeray describe Irving?

33. Do the sketches in *Bracebridge Hall* justify this description?

34. What qualities do you find in *Bracebridge Hall* that you have noticed in Irving's other writings?

35. Who are the chief characters in this book? Write a sentence descriptive of each.

36. Do the sketches, taken together, constitute a story? Why, or why not?

37. What part do the Gypsies play in this book?

38. Should you expect Irving to be lenient toward Gypsies? Why?

39. How many love affairs do you find in *Bracebridge Hall*? Name the characters involved.

40. Do you find any elements of burlesque in the account of the rookery? (Consider also the questions printed at the end of *Bracebridge Hall*.)

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. By specific references to *Westminster Abbey*, *Rip Van Winkle*, and *Bracebridge Hall*, show that Irving was a writer of leisurely mood.

2. In what respects would an account of *Christmas Eve* and of the festivities at *Bracebridge Hall* written by Franklin have differed from Irving's account?

3. Discuss *Peter the Headstrong* (1) as a piece of humor and satire, (2) as a passage of characterization, (3) as a local legend.

4. Write the story of Rip Van Winkle's return as it might have been related by his son.

5. By concrete reference to the pieces that you have read, establish the assertion that Irving was a lover of mankind.

ASSIGNMENT IV

James Fenimore Cooper

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. V.
2. *Chief American Prose Writers*, pp. 95-130.
3. *The Spy* (complete)

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Works by Cooper:

The Pilot

The Last of the Mohicans

The Prairie

2. Interpretive Works:

James Fenimore Cooper T. R. Lounsbury

Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses Mark Twain

The Historical Novel Brander Matthews

The English Novel G. T. Saintsbury

Suggested Reading in English Literature: Scott's *The Pirate* and *Quentin Durward*. Thackeray's *Novels by Eminent Hands*.

B

When Cooper started to write, he was able like Irving to look back over nearly half a century of national life. From these years of development and expansion, he chose scenes and events upon which to base his novels. The pioneer life on the frontier was ever his favorite field, and in this field he attained his highest success. The Leatherstocking Tales, consisting of *The Deerslayer*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Pathfinder*, *The Pioneers*, and *The Prairie*, form a permanent and valuable contribution to the literature of the Frontier. Cooper was close enough to the life that he described to catch its full spirit; he was far enough from it to see it in perspective. Had he been earlier, he could not have given it the romantic coloring with which he invests it. (Compare him with the early chroniclers.) Had he been later, he could not have given his books the freshness and the ingenuousness which they possess. (Compare him with authors of today who choose similar subjects—Emerson Hough, for example.) Cooper knew personally the Indian and the Pioneer, and the reader feels that the author knew them.

Stories of the sea, likewise, Cooper could write as the result of personal experience. His best known is *The Pilot*, which contains also a patriotic interest in the figure of John Paul Jones, the unnamed hero. *Red Rover* and *Wing and Wing* also deserve mention. In *The Spy*, an historical novel the

scene of which is laid in parts well known to the author, Cooper again sought inspiration in the Revolutionary War. This book, which forms a part of the assigned reading, will presently be discussed in greater detail.

Time has not dealt kindly with Cooper. The fact that he wrote many inferior novels (not named in the Syllabus) has lowered his prestige. The fashion in novels has changed. His subjects do not interest as they once did. Long descriptive passages in fiction are no longer tolerated—and Cooper is full of them. His works, furthermore, contain numerous impossible or inconsistent situations, which will not bear the test of analysis. Mark Twain has brought some of them to light in his essay on *Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses*. More serious than any of these charges, perhaps, is his inability to portray feminine character. His backwoodsmen, his savages, and his sailors live; but the women—the “females” as he styled them—have neither life nor flexibility. They are thoroughly stereotyped and uninteresting. To enumerate these and other faults is an easy task. Let us instead consider *The Spy* and see what qualities, good or bad, it reveals.

The Spy: This is an historical novel, a form of story-telling that has fallen of late into disrepute. It is maintained that this sort of novel suffers as fiction by being held too strictly to what actually took place; and that, on the other hand, the author is allowed too much freedom in the creation of situation and character to permit of any true historical value in the resultant work. Historical fiction differs widely, it should be noted, from such a work as Irving's *History of New York*. The latter is ostensibly an historical account, but is treated playfully by the author. The former is confessedly based on an invented plot; but the background and the atmosphere, and often some of the minor characters, are derived from history.

The elements which all novels possess are: (1) Plot, (2) Characterization, and (3) Setting. The value of a novel is tested by an examination of these, a fourth element, style, contributing not a little to the final judgment.

The Plot of *The Spy*—A novel customarily starts with a complication of events which place the leading characters in a difficult or unusual position. The story, as it progresses, generally plunges them deeper into the entanglement, often rescuing them from one plight merely in order to plunge them into another. When events have arrived at an unusual pitch of excitement or abnormality, the situation is called a crisis, and is followed by a period of relief brought about by a partial or a complete solution of that particular difficulty. A novel generally contains a number of these minor crises, all leading to a major crisis—the climax—the solution of which brings the end of the story. A crisis should not be solved too rapidly or too slowly. To keep the reader in suspense, but not too long in suspense, is the task of the novelist. Sometimes a sub-plot is introduced; that is, there are two or several parallel trains of action, which for a time progress independently, but sooner or later influence one another, and are apt to be united in the major crisis. The plot of a novel succeeds (1) when the events with which it deals

are on an important enough scale to arouse and maintain interest, (2) when the initial complication of events causes curiosity and, for at least one of the characters, sympathy, (3) when the relation of events is made clear, (4) when the crises contain just enough suspense, and occur frequently enough to keep the interest from flagging, (5) when the final solution satisfies both the curiosity and the sympathy of the reader, (6) when the whole narrative is properly motivated—that is, when the initial situation is reasonable and when each action is the logical consequence of something that preceded it. When the crises occur with great frequency and reach a high emotional pitch, and where something or somebody is just a little too good or a little too bad to be true, the story is said to be melodramatic.

Tested by these principles, the plot of *The Spy* is found to be well constructed and well developed; on the whole, well motivated; and in certain parts at least, inclined to be melodramatic. The events are surely significant enough in themselves; curiosity is aroused in the first chapter, sympathy by the end of the second; the action progresses rapidly, and is at no time obscure even when it puzzles; critical situations are frequent, and the reader is often kept in suspense; the end of the story answers all questions to his satisfaction; except for the fact that the Spy occasionally enters the scene more opportunely than seems natural and that some of his escapes smack of the miraculous, the entire action is reasonable. The rapidity with which the critical moments follow one another and the emotional pitch that they attain (as in the rescue of the British officer and the lynching of Skinner), together with a slight improbability that Providence would so often have been on the side of Harvey Birch, give a melodramatic flavor to *The Spy*. The student should not be content with this summary alone; he should test the book for himself in the light of these principles.

The Characterization of *The Spy*—Cleverness or force of plot alone, may suffice to make a novel interesting upon first reading, but no novel is reread with pleasure unless its characters are well drawn. Characters in fiction should have clearcut individuality, and not merely conform to a type. They should have a definite share in determining the course of events, should not merely be acted upon. They should be consistent throughout the novel; a profound change in character should always be traceable to some definite cause. Consistency is often most effectively obtained through character development: rigidity and consistency are not identical. (This phase of characterization is closely related to motivation in the plot.) They should possess such characteristics as are observable in every day life. Abnormality, like exaggeration, in character is apt to result in caricature. Characters should make a definite impression on the reader: they should evoke either his affection or his dislike, win either his admiration or his contempt, his good wishes or his bad wishes.

In *The Spy* the significant character is Harvey Birch. He possesses individuality, is not unduly exaggerated, dominates situations, and not in-

frequently creates them, is consistent, and wins the reader's unmistakable sympathy. It is not too much to say that the reader feels something truly great about this creation of Cooper's. As is so often the case in Cooper, the women of the story are disappointing. They conform to type without individuality; they seldom dominate a situation; the reader is luke-warm toward them.

The student should test the other important characters in the story, and determine how far they fulfil the requirements.

The Setting of *The Spy*—The setting of a story means the locality of the action; sometimes it means in addition those social and psychological forces which surround and may even determine the action. Setting alone will never carry a novel, but it is an aid to good plot with well developed characters. An ill-chosen setting may spoil a story otherwise good. The setting of *The Spy* is in Westchester County, New York, a region well known to the author. The number of local allusions adds vividness to the narrative. The spirit of the times is also reflected in the book, the conflict between loyalty to the king and loyalty to the cause of freedom. Notice how happy was Cooper's choice of a locality congenial to the portrayal of this particular conflict.

The Style of *The Spy*—Cooper's style is undoubtedly old-fashioned. He is often wordy and cumbersome. His descriptive passages, at their worst, are trite; at their best, they are, with rare exceptions, unnecessary. His dialogue is stilted. Yet there is a certain dignity about his style, at times a courtliness of phraseology, that is not altogether displeasing. Test the book you have just read for these qualities.

The Americanism of Cooper: Cooper's Americanism is so obvious as hardly to require comment. It is true that Scott and Byron influenced him deeply and that for some of his works he chose European subjects. But his books that have survived are thoroughly American, generally patriotic, in spirit. He represents the stage of American development where civilization and culture had progressed far enough to look back upon the path over which they had struggled, and, from the difficulties they had overcome, to view the future with optimism. The seaboard cities, in security, were developing the industries and the arts; but to the westward, and as yet not very far away, the frontier still offered infinite possibilities. It is interesting to note that European countries have accepted Cooper as one of the authoritative interpreters of American life.

OTHER EARLY WRITERS OF FICTION: Charles Brockden Brown has already been mentioned as Cooper's only significant predecessor. A younger contemporary, John Neal (1793-1876), who in *Logan*, like Cooper, deals with Indians, is today remembered only by name, if at all. In William Gilmore Simms (1806-1870), Cooper has another follower in the Indian tale. The *Yemassee* is the best of Simms' romances.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Cooper's life.
2. What was Cooper's early environment? What opportunities had he for education?
3. How did Cooper start to write novels?
4. What led to Cooper's loss of popularity?
5. In the selection entitled *The Chase* note the slow movement of the opening pages. What effect does this have on the modern reader?
6. Does the action presently become more rapid? Does the interest increase? Can Cooper thrill as well as tantalize? Cite passages.
7. Is the dialogue artificial in tone? Cite passages.
8. What impressions of Indian character do you derive from this passage?
9. What impressions of the American pioneer do you derive from this passage?
10. Write a summary of the plot of *The Spy*.
11. List the most important characters of the novel, giving each a sentence of characterization.
12. What situations in the novel should you call crises?
13. What first rouses your curiosity in the story? What first rouses your sympathy?
14. Are there any parts of the story where the interest is not maintained?
15. Is the outcome of the novel satisfying? Why?
16. Do any of the happenings seem improbable as you are reading the story? Illustrate.
17. Do any of the happenings seem improbable as you think back upon what you have read? Illustrate.
18. To what extent is the novel melodramatic?
19. What events remain with particular vividness in the memory?
20. Select an incident that is well motivated. One that is poorly motivated.
21. Which of the feminine characters is the most life-like?
22. In what respect does her characterization fail to satisfy?
23. Explain the precise position of Harvey Birch in respect to the American Army.
24. Does Harvey Birch rouse the sympathy of the reader? Why?
25. Why was it impossible for him to receive the full reward that he deserved?
26. The scene of the story is chiefly in Westchester County, New York. Where was the British army at this time? Where was the American army?
27. Explain the meaning of the sub-title of the story, *A Tale of the Neutral Ground*.
28. Is *The Spy* a patriotic story? Explain.
29. Does Cooper do justice to the British and the British sympathisers? Do you find any instances of prejudice?
30. Toward what sort of people is his attitude constantly hostile?

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Write a summary of the plot of *The Spy* in not more than 250 words.
2. Write a character sketch of Harvey Birch.
3. Select three characters from *The Spy*, other than Birch, and test them according to the principles of characterization mentioned in this section of the Syllabus.
4. What situations in *The Spy* strike you as improbable? Why?
5. What impressions of Indian nature do you get from the extract from *The Last of the Mohicans*?

ASSIGNMENT V

William Cullen Bryant

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. VI.

2. *Chief American Poets*. pp. 1-35.

(Throughout this volume the student should take advantage of the excellent footnotes.)

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Contemporary Writings:

The Culprit Fay, The American Flag Joseph R. Drake

Selected Poems including *Marco*

Bozzaris Fitz-Greene Halleck

(For these and other minor poets, the selections in Stedman's *An American Anthology* are especially recommended.)

2. Interpretive Writings:

The Life of William Cullen Bryant Parke Godwin

Bryant and His Friends J. G. Wilson

William Cullen Bryant John Bigelow

My Tribute to Four Poets Walt Whitman

Suggested reading in English Literature: Selections from the poems of Wordsworth.

B

It has already been seen that Irving based many of his essays and stories on American material, and that Cooper sought inspiration in the historical past of his own land. Bryant, who, though born in New England, was, like Cooper and Irving, one of the leaders of the Knickerbocker Group, introduced American nature—plants, birds, rivers, and mountains—into poetry. That Freneau furnished him with a precedent has been pointed out; but Freneau is altogether overshadowed by Bryant. In fact, with the possible exception of Freneau, Bryant is the first American writer in verse who can unhesitatingly be called a Poet. His poetry, like Irving's prose, lacks the modern note of energy. Like the essays in the *Sketch Book*, Bryant's verses have a leisurely tone, and never rise to a pitch of excitement. This placidity gives a mellow quality to Irving's work; to Bryant's it imparts austerity, if not coldness. Lowell compares him to an iceberg. Irving's style and literary methods changed little with the passing years or with difference of subject matter; in Bryant's even longer literary career, there is the same evenness of treatment and immutability of style.

Yet Bryant is not without value today. Pater, in his essay on Wordsworth, suggests that Wordsworth's protest against machinery will be ever more needed as mechanical devices increase and overwhelm opposition. In like manner, the spirit of contemplative leisure in Bryant's poetry may not be without significance in an age that has little time for meditation.

In the study of poetry, the student expects to find the display of imaginative powers and the presence of sincere emotion. He looks, too, for language which, however simple, is dignified and pleasing to the ear. He furthermore

desires that the language shall be eminently appropriate to the subject matter of the poem, that the sound shall never fail to fit the sense. He gives some attention to the technique of poetry which differs altogether from the technique of prose. He should note whether the poem is written in blank verse, rhymed couplets, or stanzas. He should distinguish between rhyme and rhythm, and observe that different measures are suitable for different subjects and different emotions. A knowledge of scansion, of anapests, dactyls, and iambs, may not be essential to the appreciation of a great poem, but it is knowledge that may profitably be secured. (To any who desire a more detailed knowledge in the technique of verse, Corson's *Primer of English Verse* is recommended. Most manuals of rhetoric contain a section on verse forms and scansion.)

It is customary to divide poetry into three main classes: epic, or narrative; dramatic; and lyric.

The selections from Bryant assigned for reading are lyrical poems—short poems embodying, in melodious expression, single moods of personal emotion. When we come to Poe, we shall discuss this form in greater detail.

Bryant's Americanism: Bryant's influence in impressing upon the American people the literary value of their native landscape must be kept in mind along with the similar efforts of Cooper and Irving. So well did they succeed that this attitude towards American material will be taken for granted in the writers to be considered in future assignments. In his patriotic verse, Bryant both reflects and helps to keep alive the feeling of opposition against foreign interference with our affairs. Bryant's general influence was not so great (particularly if we do not consider his work as a journalist) as that of the New England poets who succeeded him. It is therefore interesting to note that Margaret Ossoli, in her review of American Literature published in 1846 places him at the head of the poets ("at their head, Mr. Bryant stands alone"), and in the same essay condemns Longfellow as "artificial and imitative," and declares that posterity will not remember Lowell.

A few of the other poets of the period the student should know at least by name:

JOHN HOWARD PAYNE (1792-1860), whose *Home, Sweet Home* is in no danger of being forgotten.

JAMES K. PAULDING (1779-1860), who collaborated with Irving in some of his early work, and wrote at least one poem whose title has survived, *The Backwoodsman*.

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE (1775-1820), a poet of more than mediocre beauty and talent. His *Culprit Fay* has never been out of print, and is a poem thoroughly worth reading. It is interesting, among other reasons, because Drake chooses the Hudson as the setting of his fairy romance. His *Ode to the American Flag* is well known, being reprinted in every anthology of American verse.

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK (1790-1867), a friend of Drake's and a poet of considerable merit, best known for the lines on *Marco Bozzaris* and his elegy on Drake.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Bryant's life.
2. What literary work did he engage in besides poetry?
3. What works did he translate?
4. In what sense was he public-spirited? To what extent was his life a public one?
5. What were the circumstances of his death?
6. Classify the poems in your assigned reading under the following heads: (1) Poems relating to death, (2) Poems of nature, (3) Poems of patriotism, (4) Miscellaneous poems.
7. What verse form is used in the poems of the first class? Is this measure suitable for poems of this nature?
8. Do you find a note of melancholy dominant in these poems? Cite passages.
9. Are the poems pessimistic? Is melancholy necessarily accompanied by pessimism?
10. Compare *Thanatopsis* and *The Flood of Years* as regards (1) underlying idea, (2) maturity of expression, (3) imaginative power.
11. Do these poems give you the feeling that Bryant himself was one "who in the love of nature holds communion with her various forms"?
12. Write a paraphrase of *Thanatopsis*.
13. In the nature poems simple language and simple verse forms are used. Cite passages.
14. Do you consider this simplicity the result of chance or of a high degree of literary art? Explain.
15. Why would a greater amount of elaboration and ornamentation spoil these poems?
16. Notice that Bryant gives poetical treatment to flowers and birds familiar in the rural districts that he knew. Why does this fact require special comment?
17. Is *Robert of Lincoln* melodious? Explain.
18. Paraphrase *To a Waterfowl*.
19. How did Bryant come to write this poem?
20. Wordsworth in his nature poems developed the philosophical idea that nature is a remedy for the ills of man. Do you find a similar idea in Bryant's work? Is this idea developed far enough to make Bryant a philosophical poet?
21. Does Bryant show fire and energy in his patriotic verse? Cite passages.
22. Have these poems the power to stir? Explain.
23. To what emotion do they appeal?
24. Are the meters of the poems adapted to the subject matter?
25. Would the meter of the *Song of Marion's Men* be suitable for the ideas of *Thanatopsis*? Would the *Song*, if written in blank verse, be effective?
26. Notice exquisite feeling and delicate simplicity in *Fairest of the Rural Maids*. Explain.
27. The alteration of a single word or the addition of a single line would necessarily spoil the whole poem. Is this an indication of finished art?
28. Compare *The Past* with *Thanatopsis* for (1) subject matter, (2) verse form, (3) optimism or pessimism.
29. In *O Mother of a Mighty Race*, you find the expression of a permanent American ideal, together with a certain note of freshness and a hint of yet unfulfilled promise that would scarcely be possible in a twentieth century poet. Explain.
30. What is this permanent American ideal?
31. What lines indicate that the nation was still in its youth?
32. Do you find sincerity and dignity in *The Death of Lincoln*? Explain.
33. Have you read any other poem by Bryant written about a person?
34. Do you think that he was more interested in nature than in men and women?

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Make a detailed comparison of *Thanatopsis* and *The Flood of Years* as regards (1) verse form, (2) expression, (3) ideas, (4) power to move.
2. Discuss Bryant's love of nature, giving concrete examples.

3. Is Bryant's poetry religious? Is it theological? Explain and illustrate.
4. Do you enjoy his patriotic verse? Why?
5. Put into your own words the sentiments of *O Mother of a Mighty Race*.

ASSIGNMENT VI

Edgar Allen Poe

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. VII.
2. *Chief American Poets*, pp. 658-663.
3. *Chief American Prose Writers*, pp. 131-152.
4. *Chief American Poets*, pp. 36-57.
5. *Chief American Prose Writers*, pp. 152-192.

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Short Stories by Poe:

Ligeia

The Fall of the House of Usher

The Pit and the Pendulum

The Murders in the Rue Morgue

The Gold Bug

2. Criticism by Poe:

The Philosophy of Composition

3. Interpretive Works:

Edgar Allan Poe G. E. Woodberry

Life and Letters of Edgar Allen Poe J. A. Harrison

Poe's Place in American Literature H. W. Mabie

Kennedy Square Hopkinson Smith

(Poe is a character in this novel.)

4. Stories of the Poe Tradition:

The Diamond Lens Fitz-James O'Brien

What Was It? Fitz-James O'Brien

Suggested reading in English and French Literature: Selections from A. Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* stories. *The Horla* and other mystery stories by Guy de Maupassant.

(If the student wishes to trace the development of the short-story in America, he will find an adequate collection in Charles S. Baldwin's *American Short Stories* (Longmans). Brander Matthews' *Philosophy of the Short-Story* (Longmans) is also recommended. Prof. Matthews' collection entitled *The Short-Story* (American Book Co.) gives specimens of brief fiction from the writers of various countries.)

Poe as a Poet

Before reading the poetical selections from Poe, the student should read carefully his critical essay on *The Poetic Principle*, in order that he may understand what poetry meant to this author. He will then be able to pass judgment more justly upon the poems themselves; he will look not so much for sublime ideas or for philosophical grandeur as for "the rhythmical creation of beauty." Of course, this does not mean that one must agree with every step of Poe's essay. Everyone has the option of holding that there *can* be such a thing as a long poem, and that Truth is more essential to poetry than Beauty, or of believing, with Keats, that Beauty and Truth are identical. The point is rather that we should not indulge in indiscriminate censure of any piece of literature because it lacks certain qualities that we had expected it to contain, for the author may purposely have omitted these qualities. With Poe's entire attitude toward the poetic principle, then, we may take issue if we like; when we test his poetic powers as represented in his lyrics individually, we should make rhythm and beauty the standard of our judgment.

It is to be noticed that Poe's entire view of poetry limits him to the lyric, which has already been defined as a short poem embodying in melodious expression a single mood of personal emotion. These four qualities—brevity, unity, melody, and feeling—are essential to lyricism in whatever form. The lyric poet is apt to be self-analytical; Poe was so to the extent of self-consciousness. Though many lyrics are full of brightness and merriment, the lyric poet is apt to be grave more frequently than he is gay; Poe was sombre to the extent often of morbidity. The lyric poet is apt to have definite ideas concerning his art; Poe was one of the first Americans to proclaim the doctrine of art for art's sake. The lyric poet must be a singer—his words must suggest music; Poe meets this test.

As you read the poems by Poe in *Chief American Poets*, ask yourself constantly, "Does the poem succeed in the rhythmical creation of beauty?"

Poe as a Critic

As an American critic, Poe ranks high. His three well known essays (the two assigned here for study and *The Philosophy of Composition* which you are particularly urged to read in connection with *The Raven*) are permanent contributions to the literary criticism of America. Whatever limitations these pieces may have, they are at least logical, consistent, and suggestive. Poe wrote many reviews and critical comments on his contemporaries. Many of these deal with forgotten writers, and not a few are hastily and carelessly written. Others are more discriminating, and may still be read with profit.

Poe as a Story Writer

Just as his essay on *The Poetic Principle* affords the key to his poems, so Poe's criticism of Hawthorne's *Twice Told Tales* is an excellent introduction to his own masterpieces of fiction. Poe follows Hawthorne in calling the stories "tales"; today we use the term short-story. How a story that is brief is not necessarily a short-story, will be explained in the next paragraph.

The short-story, as a type of fiction, has had a brief but a glorious career. Many critics name Poe as the first writer of actual short-stories; he was certainly very influential in determining the type. There have always been brief stories; but not until the Nineteenth Century did writers of fiction recognize that what they then termed "tales" called for a specialized treatment, and could be developed into a separate class with qualities differentiating them from other fictional types. Of course, the short-story has much in common with these other forms. Like the novel, it calls for plot, characterization, and setting; and, in a general way, what makes these elements excellent in a novel makes them excellent in a short-story. The action should be significant, dramatic, and rapid; the characters sharply defined, and active participants in the events. But, whereas the plot of a novel may consist of several trains of action running parallel and at last uniting, there must be in the short-story a *single* action. Only under very exceptional conditions is a sub-plot tolerated. The action, as it progresses rapidly, must develop no side interests. Minor crises should be used with discretion lest they hinder or interfere with the major crisis of the story. This ideal of but one action necessitates few characters in the short-story—at least few important ones. Most short-stories contain a single character of significance, or a closely related pair. The characters should possess positive qualities, such as will rise to the measure of the crisis when it comes. Setting is important in the short-story. The singleness or unity of impression imparted by the singleness of action and of leading character can be either marred or enhanced by the background. The dominant note is often given by the setting in conjunction with the other elements. Style, too, plays its part. Unity of tone depends much upon the choice of words and their combinations. *Singleness of impression, then, combined with adequacy of plot and characterization, is the outstanding characteristic of the short-story.* Not every story that is brief has this quality. Of course Poe was not the first author in the history of Literature ever to write such a story. Irving, for example, several times fulfilled practically every condition. But Irving hit the mark by chance, and more frequently he did not hit it. Poe was the first consciously to apply to the writing of brief fiction the principles we have indicated. It seems almost ironical that he did not also contribute the term "short-story," the words now the most frequently coupled with his name.

It is not appropriate here to trace in detail the subsequent history of the short-story. Not only is it an essentially American contribution to literature, but it has continued to have some of its chief exponents in the American ranks. Three of them—Hawthorne, Harte, and O. Henry will be considered later in this course. France, too, has produced many excellent writers of the short-story; in fact French literature developed practically the same type independently, during the same period in which Poe and Hawthorne were establishing the form in this country. Guy de Maupassant is France's most famous short-story writer. The short-story in English Literature came somewhat later. Many living British authors have practised the art. Of contemporary writers of the short-story, Rudyard Kipling probably stands at the head.

As you read the stories of Poe, observe to what extent he applies his own principles. His stories are generally divided into two classes: those of the grotesque and the arabesque and those of ratiocination, or, to put the matter more simply, stories of horror and detective stories. (This classification is adequate at least for the stories considered in this course.)

The Masque of the Red Death: This is without question one of the finest of Poe's horror stories. Notice the strong impression that he produces by means of his gorgeous pictures. Observe how the thoughts of blood and redness and death are introduced in the opening paragraph and repeated again and again throughout the narrative, culminating in the powerful sentences of the concluding paragraph. Observe how this effect is increased by the mingling of black with the images of red as the story progresses, and by the introduction of the ebony clock with its soul-disturbing chimes. The occasional passages of beauty and the scenes of gaiety serve merely to make more tragic, by contrast, the dominant gloom of the story.

The Cask of Amontillado: The student may feel in reading *The Masque of the Red Death* that the situation and the scenes, while making a powerful imaginative appeal, do not, after all, seem at all probable. Whether or not the events might ever have taken place, such things do not happen to-day. Apart from the magical spell of the words, there is an atmosphere of unreality about the story. *The Cask of Amontillado* is of a very different sort. It is realistic: the events seem real and close as one reads. Though we may never have known of such an occurrence or seen such a spot, we feel that it might be happening just around the corner.

The Purloined Letter: As a writer of detective stories, Poe was almost a pioneer. In this branch, he has had not a few followers and imitators, many of whom have willingly paid him their acknowledgements. The detective story does not rank with the highest types of fiction; yet it is by no means unworthy. It does not, as a rule, give lofty "criticism of life," to use Matthew Arnold's definition of literature; but it gives pleasure and recreation to numerous readers, and, when well done, presents a distinct intellectual

challenge. The art of the detective story consists in keeping the reader puzzled until the end, yet showing him enough of the facts at each step for him to recognize the solution as the logical outcome of the material already at his disposal.

Poe's Americanism: Practically alone of the authors considered in this course, Poe neither reflects from the life about him what we consider distinctively American qualities, nor has an influence in the development of such qualities. Except in his critical writings, he is apt to choose subjects other than American. Foreign settings, exotic backgrounds, and past ages appeal to him. He is universally recognized as a genius. Perhaps his ready acceptance by foreign countries is due to the fact that there is nothing distinctly national about his work.

Fitz-James O'Brien (1828-1862): poet and story writer, who won a considerable reputation for his Poe-like tales. The two chiefly remembered today are included in the collateral reading assignment.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Poe's life.
2. What were the circumstances of his boyhood and youth?
3. Tell about his married life.
4. What wrecked Poe's career?
5. What extenuation can you find for Poe's mistakes?
6. Make an outline of *The Poetic Principle*.
7. Summarize in a few sentences the leading contentions of this essay.
8. Does Poe consistently carry out his theories in practice?
9. What poems by Poe are particularly characterized by morbid pessimism?
10. How does the spirit of these differ from the spirit of *Thanatopsis*? Do Poe's poems suggest a calm acceptance of the inevitable?
11. In spite of their morbidity, such poems as *The City in the Sea*, *The Conqueror Worm*, and *Ulalume* are beautiful. How do you account for this?
12. Read one of the poems aloud. Does the sound fit the sense?
13. Write a paraphrase of *The Haunted Palace*.
14. What makes your prose version less delightful reading than the poem?
15. Ascertain the precise meaning of the word "grotesque". Does this adjective satisfactorily characterize *The Raven*?
16. State the meaning of this poem in a few sentences.
17. *The Raven* is Poe's most famous poem. Do you think it deserves its popularity?
18. Does it conform with Poe's definition of poetry? Explain.
19. Rachmaninoff, the Russian pianist, has recently composed a symphony based on *The Bells*. Do you feel that the poem is closely allied to music? Explain.
20. Select lines from this poem in which the sound admirably fits the sense.
21. Memorize the stanzas entitled *To Helen*. Write them from memory. What two lines in the poem are often quoted?
22. Make an outline of the criticism of Hawthorne's *Tales*.
23. What word do we now use in place of the word "tale," as used by Poe?
24. Is *Shadow* a short story? What elements has it in common with short stories?
25. Write a brief summary of *The Masque of the Red Death*.
26. Do you know of any other story that makes use of color to the extent that this one does?
27. Do you think that the expression "barbaric opulence" may properly be applied to it? Explain.
28. In what way is this story similar to the poem *The Conqueror Worm*?
29. What lesson does *The Masque of the Red Death* teach?
30. Did Poe write the story primarily to teach this lesson?
31. Write a brief summary of *The Cask of Amontillado*.

32. Is this story well motivated? Explain.
33. Is it a story of horror? Compare it in this respect with *The Masque of the Red Death*.
34. Does the fact that you already know Montresor's intention make the dialogue more interesting?
35. With which of the two characters do you sympathize? Why?
36. Write a brief summary of *The Purloined Letter*.
37. Does the discourse on mathematics help or hinder the story? Why?
38. Exactly where is the letter finally found?
39. Besides interesting you, does the story satisfy you intellectually by its logical quality? Explain.
40. What character of more recent fiction does Dupin resemble?

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. From the two accounts of Poe's life that you have read what sort of man do you judge him to have been? Do you blame him or pity him for the defects in his character?
2. Apply Poe's standards of poetry, as given in *The Poetic Principle* to one of his own poems. Give specific details.
3. What similarities exist between the lyric as a poetical type and the short story as a prose type? Explain.
4. Show how *The Masque of the Red Death* is a short story in the strict sense of the word.
5. Write a summary of *The Purloined Letter* that will indicate the development of its plot.

ASSIGNMENT VII

Ralph Waldo Emerson

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. VIII.
2. *Chief American Poets*, pp. 58-101.
3. *Chief American Prose Writers*, pp. 301-329, 363-405, 416-434.

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Works by Emerson:

The Over-Soul (in *Chief American Prose Writers*)
Character and Manners (in *Essays, 2nd Series*)
English Traits (entire)

2. Works by Other Transcendentalists:

Selections from W. E. Channing, and selections from Margaret F. Ossoli, in Stedman and Hutchinson's *Library of American Literature*.
The Blithedale Romance Nathaniel Hawthorne
The Poets of Transcendentalism G. W. Cooke (ed.)

3. Interpretive Works:

Ralph Waldo Emerson O. W. Holmes
Emerson in Concord E. W. Emerson

<i>Emerson and Other Essays</i>	J. J. Chapman
<i>Margaret Fuller Ossoli</i>	T. W. Higginson
<i>Transcendentalism in New England</i>	O. B. Frothingham
<i>American Thought from Puritanism</i> <i>to Pragmatism</i>	I. W. Riley
<i>Brook Farm</i>	Lindsay Swift

Suggested reading in English Literature: Carlyle's *Past and Present*,
Heroes and Hero Worship.

(The student is advised not to attempt to read too much of Emerson at a single sitting. For the average reader, one of the essays will suffice for a day.)

B

Emerson is known as the foremost apostle of Transcendentalism in America. It has been seen how Calvinism dominated religious thought throughout the Colonial period, how there was in the time of the Mathers a tendency towards greater liberalism, and how under Edwards a Calvinistic revival took place. The revival was not permanent: Calvinism was opposed to the progressive forces of the day, and its victory was short-lived. It will be remembered too that the insistence upon natural sinfulness in man was one of its principal beliefs. The religion which succeeded it was Unitarianism. The fact that Unitarianism stressed rather the natural good in man is the important element in its creed to notice here. Near the beginning of the Nineteenth Century this religion became dominant in New England. About this time all the world over, there was a general spirit of unrest and a general desire for greater personal emancipation, and for the opportunity to work out one's destiny individually. Combining with the Unitarian belief in natural good, this spirit led to the declaration and the conviction that in every man there is an inborn spark of the divine, which, properly nourished, will guide him aright through life's problems. Combining with the democratic tendencies of the time, this spirit led to theories of society upon a communistic basis, where all would be equal. (The theory was actually put into practice by a group of idealists, who founded a community at Brook Farm. Emerson was in close touch with the men and women who made the short-lived experiment. Hawthorne, himself a member, has given us a picture of this community in his *Blithedale Romance*.) Combining with the political issues of the day, this spirit led to the formation of the Abolitionist Party, in the endeavor to root out slavery. These three new movements, in religion, society, and politics, became known as Transcendentalism. The name itself is derived from the religious aspect. It was first applied in derision of the belief that there is an inner moral knowledge that *transcends* experience. The influence of Unitarianism and of Transcendentalism upon American Literature is wide-reaching. The middle decades of the Nine-

teenth Century saw the literary center of the nation again located in New England, and every one of the major New England writers of this period was affected to some extent by either the greater or the lesser of these movements. (For a more detailed account than is here possible of the rise of Unitarianism and Transcendentalism, the student is referred to any of the histories of American Literature mentioned in the Foreword.)

Emerson is a man of ideas rather than a man of letters. He is an artist only incidentally; he is ever philosophical. (Contrast him in this respect with Poe.) When we turn to his poetry, then, we shall look for thought first, and beauty second. In his prose, we shall expect the intellectual element to outweigh the aesthetic. Let us proceed to consider briefly some of his most characteristic ideas which recur from time to time in both his verse and his prose.

I. *Nature as Man's Teacher*: We turn first to the prose work entitled *Nature*, which is given in part in *Chief American Prose Writers*. The initial idea that Nature by her sublimity inspires man to higher things, often reappears in Emerson's writings. Of course, this thought does not originate with Emerson, but he is one of its foremost spokesmen. Like Wordsworth, he believes that the child, through an inborn faculty of vision, sees spiritual truths more readily than does the adult. *The American Scholar* (pp. 313-314) repeats these ideas. In his poems, too, Emerson stresses this idea of Nature's inspirational function. The last stanza of *Good-Bye* is an example. This philosophy of Nature is more adequately treated in *Woodnotes*, to which *Musketaquid* may serve as a pendant. As you read these and other works of Emerson, try constantly to put his thoughts into your own words; this will be the test of whether or not you really understand him. If you find certain passages obscure, do not be discouraged. Others have had the same experience. As you continue to read him, you will find the obstacles to ready comprehension growing fewer.

II. *The Unreality of the Phenomenal World*: The section *Idealism* in *Nature* develops the theory that material things have no existence except in the mind of him who perceives them. This philosophical idea harks back to Plato, whom Emerson greatly admired, and is important in the philosophical speculation of the Twentieth Century.

III. *The Assimilation of the Individual into the Universal*: This philosophical idea probably takes its origin in Hindu philosophy. Emerson first expresses it in *Nature* (see bottom of p. 302 and top of p. 303, and pages 310 and 311). It is echoed in the concluding lines of his poem *Each and All*, in the second part of *Woodnotes*, and in the poem entitled *Thought*. Its completest, and perhaps its obscurest, expression in verse is in the little poem *Brahma*. (If the student wished to trace this idea further in Emerson, he should read particularly *The Over-Soul*.)

IV. *The Necessity for Having High Ideals and the Futility of Selfishness*: This aspect of Emerson's philosophy is easier to grasp than the others that

have been mentioned, and seems to have greater practical value for the conduct of life. This moral standard is emphasized in all of Emerson's prose and in most of his poetry. It is constantly implied in *Nature*; it finds eloquent expression in *The American Scholar*: particularly in that section that deals with the duties of the "Man Thinking." *Self Reliance* often refers to this ideal, the paragraphs on prayer (pp. 380-381) being particularly noteworthy. The struggle between virtue and vice is prominent in *Compensation*. In the sketch of Napoleon, the lesson is that his selfishness and his lack of high ideals brought about his disaster. Of the poems, *Hamatreya*, *Give All to Love*, and *Voluntaries* may be cited for their particular insistence on ideals and the futility of selfishness.

V. *The Law of Compensation*: This was a favorite theory with Emerson. The essay *Compensation* is a complete and relatively clear exposition of his thought, curiously akin to that of certain of the early Greek Philosophers. The same idea appears in *Woodnotes* (top of p. 68): *Fable* gives it a semi-humorous, *Holidays* a serious, utterance. It is interesting to note that an Emersonian insistence upon the law of compensation determines the entire plot of Booth Tarkington's recent novel of Middle Western Life, *The Magnificent Ambersons*.

VI. *The Necessity for Confidence in Oneself, and the Corresponding Necessity of not Imitating Others*: This is probably Emerson's outstanding message to his age and his country. On the positive side, it has to do with the development of the divine inner spark possessed by each man and nation. On the negative side, it protests against imitating the thoughts and the deeds of other men or of other communities. *Self Reliance* applies the ideal to the individual; *The American Scholar* makes in addition a national application. Even traveling is frowned upon as being apt to inculcate imitation (see pp. 382-383).

Since this is a course in Literature and not in Philosophy, we cannot here go any more deeply into Emerson's ideals. A word should be added as to his

Purely Literary Qualities: Emerson's prose style is not easily-flowing, like Irving's or clear and crisp like Franklin's. His style is best characterized as rugged. He is, according to the popular phrase, "hard reading." Prof. Matthews points out that his essays and his paragraphs lack structure, that his arrangement of thoughts is haphazard. Prose rhythm does not enter greatly into Emerson's writings. On the other hand, he has written many memorable, epigrammatic sentences, which for pithy wisdom quaintly expressed, surpass Franklin in the same field and often suggest the Book of Proverbs. As a poet, judged by Poe's test, he is very unequal. He is capable of the rhythmic creation of beauty, as in *Thine Eyes Still Shined*; but his intentions in writing verse were not Poe's. He believed that the thought, the message, was the end of poetical composition. *Hamatreya* is an excellent poem from this point of view, though its first line is perhaps the most

unbeautiful to be found in English or American poetry. The excellence of two of his patriotic poems, *The Concord Hymn* and the 1857 *Ode*, deserves mention.

Emerson's Americanism: Emerson and Franklin are often coupled as representing two opposite but supplementary traits of American character, Franklin being the exponent of practical shrewdness and Emerson of aspiring idealism. Emerson undoubtedly represents the Nineteenth Century flowering of that religious and moral earnestness that we have noticed in its sterner and less pleasing aspects among the Colonial divines.

In his insistence upon national development according to purely American standards, Emerson reflects a feeling that had always existed among the thinkers of the country. Washington voices it in his *Farewell Address*. Barlow wrote the ten books of *The Columbiad* to establish it. Irving, in spite of his love for the Old World, admits it. Bryant and Cooper, more or less consciously strengthen it. Washington and Jefferson had already given it its final political expression, but not until Emerson's address on *The American Scholar* had the idea been presented, in a non-political way, so forcibly and so logically. Holmes did not exaggerate when he called the speech "the intellectual Declaration of Independence."

OTHER TRANSCENDENTALISTS whose names should be known to the student are listed below:

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING (1780-1842)—one of the pioneers of the movement.

GEORGE RIPLEY (1802-1880)—founder of the Brook Farm Community.

A. BRONSON ALCOTT (1799-1888)—better known as the father of the author of *Little Women*.

MARGARET FULLER OSSOLI (1810-1850)—editor of the *Dial*, the organ of Transcendentalism.

Among more recent American philosophers at least two deserve a word of special comment: William James (1842-1910) and Josiah Royce (1855-1916). James in particular reflects the spirit of modern thought in nearly as representative a way as Emerson reflected the spirit of the mid-Nineteenth Century. James' *Pragmatism*, *The Meaning of Truth*, *Some Problems of Philosophy*, and *The Will to Believe* are valuable contributions to American philosophical literature as are Royce's *The Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, *Studies of Good and Evil*, and *William James and Other Essays*.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Emerson's life.
2. To what extent did Emerson travel?
3. Why did Emerson not remain in the ministry?
4. With what movement did he become associated?
5. How did Emerson feel toward The Civil War?
6. What philosophical idea is suggested by the concluding lines of *Thought*?
7. Does *Each and All* contain any similar idea?

8. Compare this idea with *Woodnotes* (ll.252-318). Paraphrase these lines.
9. Paraphrase the poem *Brahma*.
10. Apply Poe's definition of poetry to *Thine Eyes Still Shined*.
11. Memorize the *Concord Hymn*. Write it from memory.
12. *The Humble-Bee* displays love of nature. Cite passages.
13. *Woodnotes* has the same quality. This poem contains the idea that Nature is a source of strength to man. Cite specific lines.
14. How does *Fable* illustrate the law of compensation?
15. Paraphrase *Holidays*.
16. How does *Hamatreya* show the futility of selfishness?
17. Explain the meaning of the two concluding lines of *Give All to Love*.
18. What is the underlying idea of *Musketaquid*?
19. Paraphrase *Days*.
20. Paraphrase the third stanza of *Voluntaries*. Memorize the last four lines of the stanza.
21. Make an outline of the extract from *Nature*.
22. What does Emerson mean by the statement "Few adult persons can see Nature" (p 302)?
23. What does he mean by the statement, "Nature is made to conspire with spirit to emancipate us" (p. 305)?
24. Explain the statement, "Intellectual science has been observed to beget invariably a doubt of the existence of matter" (p. 308.)
25. Write a summary of *The American Scholar*.
26. What does Emerson consider the function of books? (See pp. 314-318.)
27. How does Emerson regard work?
28. Write a summary of *Self Reliance*.
29. Explain the meaning of "Whoso would be a man, must be a non-conformist."
30. Explain Emerson's conception of prayer (pp. 380-382).
31. What does he mean by "the superstition of travelling"?
32. Make an outline of *Compensation*.
33. Explain the meaning of "Every advantage has its tax" (p. 402).
34. Explain the sentence, "Every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor" (p. 400).
35. What traits of character does Emerson attribute to Napoleon?
36. Explain the sentence, "I call Napoleon the agent or attorney of the middle class of modern society" (p. 431).
37. Does the law of compensation make itself felt in Emerson's account of Napoleon? Cite instances.
38. What, according to Emerson, brought about Napoleon's downfall?
39. Select a dozen sentences from Emerson's prose that might serve as mottoes.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Explain Emerson's view of travel. Compare them with Irving's. With which do you agree? Why?
2. To what extent does Emerson utilize the scenery and the life of New England in his poetry? Give examples, and comment upon the nature element in his verse.
3. Explain the following sentences, and discuss them as representative of Emerson's philosophy: (1) "Prayer as a means to effect a private end is meanness and theft," (2) "In self-trust all the virtues are comprehended," (3) "Traveling is a fool's paradise," (4) "The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet."
4. What evidence do you find in *The American Scholar* and in *Self Reliance* that Emerson was moved by a revolutionary spirit?
5. Give in your own words the meaning of the passages from *Nature* quoted in *Chief American Prose Writers*.

ASSIGNMENT VIII

Henry David Thoreau

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. XIII.
2. *Chief American Prose Writers*, pp. 435-494.

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Works by Thoreau:
Walden (portions of this are in the required reading)
The Maine Woods
Cape Cod
2. Interpretive Works:
Henry David Thoreau F. B. Sanborn
Thoreau, the Poet Naturalist W. E. Channing
Thoreau, His Life and Aims H. A. Page
3. Works by Other American Authors on Nature and Outdoor Life:
Buds and Bird Voices Nathaniel Hawthorne
Birds and Bees John Burroughs
(Riverside Literature Series)
Studies in Nature and Literature John Burroughs
(Riverside Literature Series)
In the Wilderness Charles D. Warner
(Riverside Literature Series)
Wild Animals I have Known Ernest T. Seton
Fisherman's Luck Henry Van Dyke

B

In Thoreau, there is a simplicity, a directness of thought, that is lacking in Emerson. In sincerity the two are equal. Thoreau's utter disregard for society and for convention strikes us as being at once sublime and humorous. His idealism always had a practical side, as his life proves. There is a certain naive shrewdness about him that suggests Franklin; but unlike Franklin's, his shrewdness is never materialistic. The earlier writer preached constantly the accumulation of property; his successor believed that happiness is to be attained by the abandonment of worldly possessions. A list of the greatest books by American authors, however small it were to be, would undoubtedly contain both Franklin's *Autobiography* and Thoreau's best autobiographical work, *Walden*. Upon the selections assigned for reading, little comment is needed. After you know the facts of Thoreau's life, his writings are self-explanatory.

In his insistence on the free development of individual characteristics, Thoreau is in direct line with the Transcendentalists. He was, however, too idiosyncratic to ally himself definitely with any movement. The thought that the less we have of worldly goods, the richer we are, is not original with Thoreau; but he probably applied the principle more consistently to his daily life than had anyone before him, unless we look to the Indian mystics or the medieval friars.

One important point to note about Thoreau is that he never poses, despite all his eccentricities. What he did, he did not do for effect. He was never

willing to conform; but he never used his non-conformity to advertise himself. His disregard for the world was genuine, on no occasion assumed.

Thoreau's Americanism: Can anyone so absolutely individual as Thoreau be said to reflect or to influence national character? Perhaps not. Yet could a man like Thoreau have existed anywhere but in America? Shelley and Byron both thought that they owed no allegiance to society and to convention; yet, compared with the American, they were shackled. In one respect at least, Thoreau represents an important phase of our national life—the out-of-doors. Among the naturalists of America, even though he is occasionally inaccurate, Thoreau must be given an important place. It is appropriate here to mention certain other American writers who have embodied in their books the out-of-doors spirit. Let us consider briefly a few of the

American Naturalists, Hunters, and Campers: John James Audubon (1780-1851) is best known for his *Birds of America*. As a writer he is nearly forgotten; but his deeds as an indefatigable nature lover are still remembered.

Charles Dudley Warner (1829-1900), a versatile essayist, wrote numerous pieces dealing with the charm of out-of-doors.

Ernest Thompson Seton (1860-). Though born in England, Seton is claimed by America, where he has spent most of his life. His books are enthusiastic in praise of out-door life.

Theodore Roosevelt (1850-1919) is well known for his writings of camp and trail. His *Ranch Life and The Hunting Trail* will suffice for example. It is interesting to note that a goodly number of our Presidents have been incidentally men of letters.

Henry Van Dyke (1852-). In a leisurely style, somewhat reminiscent of Irving, Van Dyke has given us fascinating pictures of life in the wilds and along streams.

John Burroughs (1837-) is, of course, the leader of American naturalists of today. His *Wake Robin* is probably his best volume of nature lore.

The list of American naturalists is not by any means exhausted by this brief enumeration. It should be noted also in passing that many of our major writers like Irving, Hawthorne, and Lowell, have written occasional essays on out-of-doors life that rank with the best. The use of Nature in the poets is mentioned elsewhere in the Syllabus.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Thoreau's life.
2. What was his education, and what were his literary tastes?
3. What trades did he know?
4. Give an account of his first published book.
5. Did Thoreau lead a public or a private life?
6. Why did Thoreau spend about two years in his cabin?
7. Why did he leave his cabin at the end of this time?

8. Where was Thoreau's cabin situated?
9. Explain the sentence, "A man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone" (p. 435).
10. Thoreau like many of the Transcendentalists was versed in Hindu philosophy. Select half a dozen references to it in his writings.
11. Thoreau was an admirer of the Greeks and Greek literature. Select a dozen references to these in his writings.
12. Interpret the sentence "Morning brings back the heroic ages" (p. 441).
13. Explain the sentence, "Our life is frittered away by detail" (p. 443).
14. Explain Thoreau's attitude toward the post-office and the press. (See p. 445 ff. and p. 481 ff.)
15. Define "solitude" and "loneliness" according to Thoreau.
16. Explain the sentence, "Society is too cheap" (p. 454).
17. Compare the thought of the first paragraph on p. 459 with Emerson's ideas on travel.
18. Explain the sentence, "Cultivate poverty like a garden herb" (p. 464).
19. Make an outline of *Life Without Principle*. (Let this outline indicate the important ideas of the essay but omit details.)
20. Explain the sentence, "The ways by which you may get money almost without exception lead downward."
21. Ascertain the precise meaning of the word "cynicism." Select passages from *Life Without Principle* that are cynical.
22. Explain the sentence, "I hardly know an *intellectual* man, even, who is so broad and truly liberal that you can think aloud in his society" (p. 478).
23. How does Thoreau regard politics? (See pp. 486-487.)
24. What did Stevenson mean when he called Thoreau a "skulker"?
25. Do you think that Thoreau was a skulker? Why or why not?
26. Thoreau was a sincere appreciator of Nature. Select from his writings half a dozen passages that show love for and keen observation of natural phenomena.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Write a brief character sketch of Thoreau. Do you think the world is better for having had such a man as Thoreau in it. Why or why not?
2. Compare the views of Emerson and Thoreau on (1) travel, (2) nature, (3) the natural good in man.
3. Discuss the revolutionary spirit in Thoreau, with specific references to what you have read. How much had Thoreau in common with the Transcendentalists?
4. Discuss Thoreau's cynicism, with specific references to what you have read. Should you call him a misanthrope? Should you call him a reformer? Why or why not?
5. Explain in detail the following sentences: (1) "There is no more fatal blunderer than he who consumes the greater part of his life getting a living," (2) "Read not the times. Read the eternities," (3) "If we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads?"

ASSIGNMENT IX

Nathaniel Hawthorne

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. IX.
2. *Chief American Prose Writers*, pp. 193-300.
3. *The House of the Seven Gables* (entire)

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Works by Hawthorne:
The Scarlet Letter
Twice Told Tales

Mosses from an Old Manse
Our Old Home
 Selections from *The American Note Books*

2. Interpretive Writings:

Nathaniel Hawthorne Henry James
Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife Julian Hawthorne
Memories of Hawthorne Rose H. Lathrop

B

Irving was a man of talent; Emerson was a man of inspiration; Hawthorne was a man of genius. Most of the major writers of America are in rank with Irving or with Emerson. Poe rescues Hawthorne from isolation.

Hawthorne has been called the great American romancer. This is something for the student to consider in approaching the work of this author. It has already been pointed out that a novel must possess certain characteristics of plot, characterization and setting. How does a romance, then, differ from a novel? In most ways they are alike; but, whereas the novelist endeavors to see and to portray life with the utmost clearness and distinctness, the romancer views life, so to speak, through a thin mist, a mist not heavy enough to obscure (else the romance does not live), but enough to tone down the sharp edges and to soften the outlines. Just as mist may give a false idea of size or proximity, so romance may, within limits, exaggerate. Just as mist may conceal minor details, so romance is at liberty to disregard them as irrelevant. Just as mist sometimes imparts a hue of its own, in like manner romance colors its material. The plot of a romance should be not a bit inferior to that of a novel, but we are a little more ready to believe in the improbable. Logical motivation is important, but not quite so important as it is in the novel. Characterization in a romance should be true to human nature, but we do not so urgently insist upon the normal. We do not reject unusual characteristics, and we do not object to a slight heightening or deepening of effects. The setting in a romance is rarely confined to locality; the social or spiritual forces that surround the events are generally more significant. Style is important; no one more than the romancer needs the gift of the magic word. In the Preface to *The House of the Seven Gables*, Hawthorne proclaims the book, not a novel, but a romance.

The House of the Seven Gables: In this, as in most of his works, Hawthorne is the interpreter of the early days in New England. Of this life he has given us the most imaginative and the most picturesque account that we possess. To realize the actual value of his achievement, recall the first assignment of this course, where you studied the elements out of which Hawthorne created his romances. Has not his creative imagination effected such a metamorphosis of this crude material that you scarcely recognize the original in the finished product?

The Plot of *The House of the Seven Gables*: In the early part of this work, Hawthorne rouses both the curiosity and the sympathy of the reader. Your sympathy for Hepzibah increases through the entire chapter entitled "The Little Shop Window." You are curious to know more of the original of the miniature. You are baffled by the early glimpse of Holgrave. As the story goes along, other mysterious elements enter, but in the end all doubts are solved, and the reader feels satisfied with the outcome. (In another of Hawthorne's romances, by the way—*The Marble Faun*—the author does not sufficiently satisfy the curiosity of the reader.) The student should test the plot of *The House of the Seven Gables* by the principles already defined. But, after all, the chief interest in this book is not the plot. When you read *The Spy*, unless you are a very sophisticated novel reader, you were thrilled by what happened: you skipped passages to discover the outcome of a tense situation. In Hawthorne's romance, however, the chief interest centers rather in the characters.

The Characters of *The House of the Seven Gables*: Miss Hepzibah, the Judge, Clifford, Phoebe Pyncheon, and Holgrave are the leading characters. Miss Hepzibah is, of course, the central figure. Notice how skillfully Hawthorne has built up her character by describing her appearance, by relating her actions, by analysis of her thoughts and by occasionally interpolating a comment. She possesses positive qualities; she is more than a puppet; she merits your good wishes. Observe how the occasional note of humor (on Hawthorne's part) prevents the picture from becoming sentimental. Would you not, in actual life, both pity and respect, and at the same time be a little amused at, a lady of Miss Pyncheon's type? Judge Pyncheon was a difficult character for Hawthorne to make convincing. He accomplishes his purpose, however, by making the reader first believe in the grim qualities possessed by the founder of the house; then it is easier to credit the same characteristics to his descendant. If the first chapter were omitted, you would feel that the picture of the Judge was exaggerated and unnatural. Clifford, as the author undoubtedly intended, is at best a shadowy figure. You can easily write a character sketch of Hepzibah or the Judge, but can you of Clifford? Phoebe introduces the note of cheer into an otherwise gloomy book. Notice that she is set off, now against Hepzibah, now against the Judge, for the purpose of contrast. The grim picture of the older generation is intensified and made more interesting by means of this contrast. Holgrave, like Clifford, is rather indefinitely sketched. He is necessary to the plot of the book; but his is a rather colorless figure in itself. We should include the original Pyncheon and the original Maule in our enumeration of the principal characters. It is true that they are both dead before the end of the first chapter; but their influence dominates the whole romance. Nor should we fail to point out the excellent characterization of such minor figures as Uncle Venner and the gingerbread-loving urchin, who is certainly possessed of human qualities. To a story like this that lays chief stress on

character, and analyzes the feelings and the motives of the actors, and is interested in tracing their mental workings, we may apply the term "psychological."

The Setting of *The House of the Seven Gables*: You cannot fancy the events of this romance taking place in Chicago, San Francisco, or Atlantic City. The importance of the New England setting is second only to the importance of the characters. In fact, the setting, in one way, determines the characters. Setting here manifestly means more than locality. The tremendous force of habit, of public opinion, and of tradition, all go to make up the atmosphere, the spirit that enwraps—almost enshrouds—the entire story.

The Style of *The House of the Seven Gables*: That Hawthorne's style has grace and beauty is too self evident to require comment. It has the same leisurely flow that you have already found in Irving's essays. He takes time to let his fancy play around certain thoughts and certain images; he is not in a hurry. What he lacks in speed, he compensates for in picturesqueness. Consider the superb effectiveness of the slowly progressing scene in which the death of the Judge is gradually revealed.

Hawthorne as a Writer of Short-Stories: You have read Poe's critical comments on his fellow-author's "tales"—or as we should now call them, "short-stories"; and you have read some of the best stories that Hawthorne wrote. It will be interesting to see whether your opinions agree with Poe's. Many of these short-stories interpret, just as do the longer romances, the life of early New England. Hawthorne's range of interests was relatively narrow; yet he is never monotonous. His imagination kindles whatever it touches, and is constantly appearing in new forms.

Hawthorne's Americanism: As the interpreter of an earlier period of the nation to the men and the women of his own day and of ours, Hawthorne stands supreme. In fact, he was himself a Nineteenth Century embodiment of Puritanism, a Puritanism the corners of which had been rubbed smooth by the lapse of time, but which still retained traces, if not of its grimness, at least of its pristine gloom. Hawthorne never invented a slogan to inspire us; he does not even represent the progressive spirit of the nation. He contributes to the Americanism of our literature by linking us a little more sympathetically with the early settlers of New England. From this point of view, Hawthorne has much to give Twentieth Century readers.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Hawthorne's life.
2. What were the circumstances of Hawthorne's boyhood?
3. To what extent was Hawthorne's life a public one?
4. How extensively did he travel?
5. Under what circumstances did he begin to write *The Scarlet Letter*?
6. Write a summary of Hawthorne's preface to *The House of the Seven Gables*.
7. The first chapter is like a prologue to the rest of the story. Why is this chapter necessary to what follows?

8. Write a character sketch of the original Pyncheon. Does he suggest Cotton Mather in any way?
9. Narrate in your own words the story of his death.
10. In what ways does Judge Pyncheon of the romance resemble his ancestor?
11. To what extent does Miss Hepzibah resemble her ancestor? How does she differ?
12. Tell briefly the circumstances of the death of Judge Pyncheon's uncle.
13. Select several passages that show that Phoebe was a natural, spontaneous girl.
14. How is the long Pyncheon-Maule feud ended?
15. Are you at any time in doubt as to whether Clifford killed Judge Pyncheon? What circumstances make you think that he did? What circumstances make you think that he did not?
16. Do you suspect Holgrave's identity before it is revealed? What hints are furnished?
17. Select half a dozen passages from *The House of the Seven Gables* illustrative of Hawthorne's humor.
18. This romance exemplifies the Emersonian conception of the law of compensation. Mention half a dozen situations that establish this assertion.
19. A piece of fiction is symbolic when it is a concrete embodiment of a basic truth of humanity, when the events are chiefly valuable as they represent universal experiences. Is *The House of the Seven Gables* symbolic? Is *The Spy*? Is *The Masque of the Red Death*? Is *The Purloined Letter*?
20. In two or three sentences summarize the plot of *The Wedding Knell*.
21. What truth does this story symbolize?
22. What elements of romance has *The May Pole of Merry Mount*?
23. Note Hawthorne's frequent use of contrasting effects, e. g., the gaiety of the frolickers as opposed to the sombreness of the Puritans. Mention several instances of similar contrasted effects in Hawthorne's writings.
24. Write a brief summary of *Young Goodman Brown*.
25. Is this story psychological? Explain.
26. Note the stern insistence on retribution in *Roger Malvin's Burial*. Where else do you find this idea in Hawthorne's writings? What has it in common with the religion of his Puritan ancestors?
27. What is the setting of *Rappaccini's Daughter*? What other work by Hawthorne deals with the same country?
28. Does the retributive idea enter this story? How?
29. What distinguishes the daughter of Rappaccini from the rest of humanity?
30. What misfortune overtakes the hero of the story?
31. What truth does *Rappaccini's Daughter* symbolize?
32. To what extent do Cooper, Poe, and Hawthorne display the following qualities: (1) morality, (2) humor, (3) love for humanity, (4) patriotism, (5) pessimism, (6) beauty of expression?

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Write in about 250 words a summary of the plot of *The House of the Seven Gables*.
2. How are the following facts motivated; i. e., what previous element in the story makes them reasonable and natural?
 - (a) Miss Pyncheon's refusal to take the cent from her first customer.
 - (b) Clifford's fear of Judge Pyncheon.
 - (c) The sudden death of Judge Pyncheon.
 - (d) The discovery of the parchment.
3. Write on Hawthorne's use of contrast in his stories. Cite specific passages.
4. Write on the theory of retribution in his stories.
5. How does *Rappaccini's Daughter* satisfy the technical requirements of the short-story as discussed in the assignment on Poe?

ASSIGNMENT X

Herman Melville

A

Required Reading:

(Here the biographical account in the Syllabus, of Melville, should be read before the story.)

1. *Moby Dick* (entire)

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Works by Melville:

Typee (Everyman's Library)

Omoo (Everyman's Library)

White-Jacket

2. Interpretive Works:

The Life of a Little College A. MacMechan
(Article entitled *The Greatest Sea
Story Ever Written*)

Our Young Authors—Melville F. J. O'Brien
(In *Putnam's*, Feb. 1853)

Centennial of Herman Melville R. M. Weaver
(In *Nation*, Aug. 2, 1919)

The Old Merchant Marine R. D. Paine

3. Stories of the Sea:

Wing and Wing J. F. Cooper

Two Years Before the Mast R. H. Dana, Jr.

Suggested reading in English Literature: Marryat's *Peter Simple*, *Midshipman Easy*; Conrad's *Lord Jim*, *Typhoon*, *The Shadow Line*.

B

Biographical Sketch of Melville: On the first day of August, 1819, Herman Melville was born in New York City. Seventy-two years later, on the twenty-eighth of September, 1891, he died in the same city. Thus his dates are practically identical with those of Lowell; but we regard him as belonging to an earlier period because after 1851, he published no work of real significance.

About Melville's boyhood, few facts are known, except that it was spent in the neighborhood of Albany. His father was a New York merchant, who died when Herman was still young. The boy, however, appears to have received a good education: his writings contain references to books and reading that indicate wide familiarity with the best in literature, and at one time he held the position of schoolmaster. But before his early training bore any literary fruit, Melville was to have a career which may unhesitatingly be called adventurous.

At the age of eighteen, shortly after the death of his father, Herman shipped as cabin boy on board a merchant vessel. Various explanations for this act have been suggested, the most interesting being that the social restrictions of life in New York chafed him until he could no longer endure

them. He returned safely from this voyage, with memories that later produced his book *Redburn*, and became a landsman again for a short time. In 1841, however, the call of the sea was too strong, and he shipped on a whaling vessel, "The Acushnet," sailing from New Bedford. It is said that he received his immediate impetus from reading Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*, which had been published the previous year, and which doubtless stirred numerous young men to follow the sea. The voyage was long enough and disagreeable enough to cool his youthful ardor. His entire sojourn in the Pacific lasted eighteen months, but during this period he spent a considerable amount of time on land among the savage tribes of the Marquesas Islands in the Polynesian group, having deserted the ship with a friend as a result of the brutality of the Captain. A full, though perhaps a somewhat imaginative account of these experiences is related in his romance *Typee* and its sequel *Omoo*. Melville did not, as some have asserted, quit the sea in 1842 as a result of the hardships of this cruise. In 1843 according to his own statement in the preface to *White-Jacket*, he began his man-of-war experiences. The book just named relates his life aboard the government frigate "The United States."

By 1845, however, his roving life was at an end. In that year his first book, *Typee*, was published, and in the following year, he married Miss Elizabeth Shaw of Boston. During the first few years of his married life, he resided in New York. Then he took up his abode in a farmhouse near Pittsfield, Mass., his new home being known as Arrow Head. In this house, which is still standing, he wrote his masterpiece, *Moby Dick*. Here too, he soon formed a friendship with the Hawthorne family, who lived only a short distance away. Melville and Hawthorne found in each other much that was congenial, and remained friends until Hawthorne's death. During the 1850-1860 decade Melville was a well-known figure. His books brought him great literary fame, and during the height of his popularity he made several lecturing tours, going, it is said, as far as San Francisco.

But Melville's public career was brief. There was always in him an element of melancholy and a tendency to dream that made him prefer a life of seclusion. A fall from a wagon about this period, which resulted in a serious shock to his system, was perhaps another reason for his desire for a less energetic life. In 1863 he sold his farm, Arrow Head, or Saddle Meadows as it is sometimes called, to his brother. About this time, he removed with his family to New York, where in 1865 or 1866 he was appointed to a position in the New York Customs House, which he held for about twenty years. During his last years he was regarded practically as a hermit by his neighbors. He might have had many friends, for though his later books were never popular, the reputation of his earlier ones would have given him a position of prestige in literary circles. But he preferred to be solitary. Apparently, his withdrawal from society contained no element of cynicism or bitterness. The few who knew him found his personality charming and

his conversational abilities considerable when he could be persuaded to emerge from his silence. His death in 1891 caused little comment.

As has been suggested, Melville had a period of great popularity, the characters of some of his earlier works being household allusions in their day. Newspapers and magazines on both sides of the Atlantic gave him frequent notice and unstinted praise. But, as he writes in a forgotten poem, "Fame is a wake that after-wakes cross." When he ceased to produce romances that the public liked, it rapidly forgot him. Of late there has been an attempt to revive his fame. Some of his works have appeared in modern editions; several critics have called the attention of their readers to him; in the summer of 1919, upon the hundredth anniversary of his birth, he received mention in many newspapers and periodicals.

The following is a list of his published works: in prose, *Typee*, *Omoo*, *Mardi*, *Redburn*, *White-Jacket*, *Moby Dick*, *Pierre*, *Israel Potter* (an historical novel), *The Piazza Tales*, and *The Confidence Man*; in verse, *Battle Pieces and Aspects of the War*, *Clarel*, *John Marr and Other Sailors*, and *Timoleon*.

Melville as a writer: Melville was not a novelist as Cooper was. In spirit he was more of a romancer, more like Hawthorne. Like his friend, he was inclined to be gloomy, though with not infrequent flashes of humor, and inclined to interpret life symbolically. He too viewed events through a mist. In his early works, the mist was thin and serves only to make the scene more picturesque. Later, as we have indicated, the mist became heavy enough to cause obscurity, and his later works have perished in consequence. But though his books resemble Hawthorne's to a certain extent, their subject matter is altogether different. Melville was primarily a writer of the sea tale. The sea tale differs from a novel like *The Spy* or from a romance like *The House of the Seven Gables* in various ways. The plot, in the first place, need not be so intricately constructed. It usually centers around a sea-voyage, and is a simple narrative of what happened on this voyage. There is apt to be not a series of crises, but a series of episodes, perhaps only slightly connected with one another. The interest of the reader is in the individual episode as he reads it, and not in the relation of these happenings to others in the chain. Nevertheless there may be one dominant interest throughout the entire tale, more or less loosely uniting these episodes and leading to a climax. As each different episode may involve a different set of chief characters, the element of character development is not apt to be so strong as it is in the novel. Furthermore, the fact that the characters are practically bound to the ship, the fact that there is a lack of variety in their surroundings, makes development or change of character less probable. (Conrad's *The Shadow Line* might be cited in opposition to this statement, but it is true of the average sea tale.) The characters should be true to life; but it is a rare landsman who can pronounce authoritatively on the traits of the sailor. Setting is important in the sea tale. This type of fiction is of chief value as it interprets the spirit of the sea and the atmosphere of

the boat. Nobody should endeavor to write a sea tale who is not thoroughly conversant with life upon the deep and all the facts involved in such a life.

Moby Dick: W. Clarke Russell, himself a writer of sea tales, pronounced *Moby Dick* the best sea story ever written. Superlatives are always rash; but it is surely not an easy task to match this story. It has magnificent sweep as it passes from one portion of the hydrosphere to another; it gives a feeling of vastness, of illimitable space. The author is master of the broad stroke; his imaginative power is tremendous. On the other hand, no other writer of the sea has given us in a single book such a store of detailed information about the life of the sailor on sea and on land, about whales and the whaling industry, and about the multitudinous creatures that people the ocean. It has been pointed out that the book has both epic and encyclopedic qualities.

The Plot of *Moby Dick*: Notice the slow movement of the action in the first part of the story. This helps in giving you a correct picture of the life of the sailor, whose daily routine is monotonous and uneventful, with only an occasional item of interest. You get a far more valuable conception of the existence aboard a whaler than if a great many exciting crises were to be introduced. Then notice how, gradually, just as it grew upon the minds of the sailors themselves, enthusiasm for the pursuit creeps little by little into your consciousness until everything is dominated by the spirit of the chase and the struggle between man and the forces arrayed against man. In the first part of the story, you are interested in the episodes—in the apparitions of the squid, in the massacre of the sharks, in the Town-Ho's story. Later you are infected, as it were, by a bit of Ahab's madness, which carries you rapidly, powerfully, on an irresistible tidal wave of concentrated interest to the almost cosmic conflict that dramatically ends the story.

The Characters of *Moby Dick*: If Melville possessed, in common with Cooper, an inability to portray feminine character—at least *civilized* feminine—he surpassed Cooper in discretion, and did not attempt any such delineation. Do you know of any other five hundred page work of fiction in which the feminine element is given so little prominence? A yellow petticoat flashes meteor-like before the reader for one brief instant (See p. 61); the rest is man and fish. Observe that practically every character in the book worth mentioning is abnormal. Queequeg is humorously abnormal, Ahab tragically so. Even the narrator is not the ordinary narrator. Ahab is, of course, the strong man of the book: he dominates the crew, and eventually the reader. He is dominated only by his madness and the white whale.

The Setting of *Moby Dick*: Note the very effective use of contrast between the dirty, overcrowded little whaling-town and the vast expanses of the Pacific, where for weeks, not another sail is seen. Do you not sense, as you read, that Melville was an experienced seaman, that he had great stores of personal experience from which to draw? Observe in addition to the physical

setting, the psychological setting in which you detect the presence of unseen forces, hostile to man and cooperating to cause his downfall.

The Style of Moby Dick: Vividness is an outstanding characteristic of Melville's style. You get a splendid series of pictures as you read. The brief description of the squid is unforgettable. In the hundred and tenth chapter, the cry of the captain, dominated even in his sleep by madness—"Stern all! The White Whale spouts thick blood."—has a gripping quality that approaches genius. Notice that although the style of *Moby Dick* is sometimes lofty and impressive, at other times it descends to a realistic representation of seaman's talk.

The Whaling Industry: It should be remembered that before the Civil War American shipping surpassed in enterprise that of either England or France, who did not recoup their losses in the Napoleonic Wars until our rivalry was removed by the internal conflict. Melville writes of the period when the Yankee cutter and the Yankee clipper were familiar sights in all the seven seas, when the energy and the daring of our seamen filled purses and stirred the imagination. At this period the whaling industry was one of the most lucrative and adventurous. Nantucket and New Bedford were the chief rendezvous of the whalers. Melville, as has been pointed out, had taken active part in a lengthy whaling cruise and was in consequence well fitted to interpret this life to the world.

Melville's Americanism: In the farmhouse near Pittsfield, where he wrote *Moby Dick*, there hangs a portrait of Melville as a young man. The face is without the heavy beard that all the later pictures show. The features and the expression bespeak the qualities of strength, energy, and aspiration that we like to think of as being typically American. Melville's career was an American one through and through. Despite aristocratic traditions in his family, there was a fine democracy about him. Practical shrewdness and idealism were both present in his character. The spirit of adventure was powerful in him, but it did not prevent a keen enjoyment of domestic life. If no country but ours could have bred Thoreau, a similar assertion is even truer in the case of Melville.

Sea Fiction in American Literature: In writers both of poetry and of prose, we find frequent use of sea material; yet the significant sea fiction of our nation is not very extensive. Cooper, as we have seen, wrote a number of novels dealing with the sea. Poe, in one of his few longer prose works—*The Narrative of A. Gordon Pym*—deals with a sea voyage in characteristic manner. Outside of Cooper and Melville, the best book of the sea by an American author is *Two Years Before the Mast* by Richard Henry Dana (1815-1882), a charmingly written account of the author's personal experiences. Among modern writers Jack London (1876-1916) deserves mention for such a powerful picture of sailing as *The Sea Wolf*. No writer of to-day, however, in this field can rival Joseph Conrad, a Polish author who lives in England and writes in English.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Melville's life.
2. What voyages did Melville make? To what extent was his experience as a sailor varied?
3. What other writer considered in this course became his friend?
4. To what extent was Melville a popular writer?
5. To what extent are his best books autobiographical?
6. What were the circumstances of Melville's last years?
7. List the differences between a novel and a sea-tale. Show how *Moby Dick* is a sea-tale rather than a novel.
8. Explain the opening sentence of the story, "Call me Ishmael."
9. Into what main episodes may the book be divided?
10. What proportion of *Moby Dick* deals with life on land?
11. What indications are there in Chapter II that indicate Melville's philosophic turn of mind?
12. Does this tendency towards philosophy and metaphysics continue throughout the book?
13. Of what truth of human existence is *Moby Dick* symbolic?
14. How does Queequeg first enter the story?
15. What indications of insanity does Capt. Ahab give early in the story?
16. What previous encounter had he had with the White Whale?
17. Explain why Melville regarded the *whiteness* of the whale as significant (See Chapter XLI).
18. Write a summary of Chapters LVII and LVIII.
19. Select a dozen interesting facts concerning whales from different portions of history.
20. Select half a dozen passages illustrative of Melville's imaginative power.
21. Select half a dozen passages illustrative of Melville's humor.
22. Select half a dozen passages illustrative of his use of homely details.
23. Write a summary of the three concluding chapters of *Moby Dick*.
24. Do you find the ending of the tale satisfactory? Why or why not?
25. To what extent does the ending suggest the ending of *The Masque of the Red Death*?

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. What episode, apart from the final conflict with the white whale, interested you most? Narrate this episode in your own words.
2. Write a character sketch of Captain Ahab.
3. Write your impressions of everyday life aboard a whaler derived from *Moby Dick*.
4. Discuss *Moby Dick* as an educational book.
5. Do you agree with the statement in the Syllabus that the characters are chiefly abnormal? Explain, and illustrate.

ASSIGNMENT XI

Francis Parkman

A

Required Reading;

1. *Introduction to American Literature* Chap. XV, also pp. 238-239.
2. *The Oregon Trail* (entire)

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. American Historians:
The Conspiracy of Pontiac Francis Parkman

La Salle: or the Discovery of the Great

West Francis Parkman
Montcalm and Wolfe Francis Parkman

(The reading of Parkman's entire
series is heartily recommended)

The Conquest of Peru William H. Prescott

The Beginnings of New England John Fiske

The Winning of the West Theodore Roosevelt

2. Personal Accounts:

A Tour of the Prairies Washington Irving

'*Boots and Saddles*' Elizabeth Custer

3. Interpretive Works:

Francis Parkman C. H. Forham

The Old Northwest F. A. Ogg

The Paths of Inland Commerce A. B. Hulbert

Adventurers of Oregon C. L. Skinner

The Passing of the Frontier Emerson Hough

B

It is not the aim of the present discussion to pass judgment upon the historical value of Parkman's work. Suffice it to say that his works are as valuable as they are interesting, as accurate as they are picturesque. From no other source will the reader obtain as vivid and as complete an account of the phase of our early history that Parkman treats as in his writings. Of the other American historians, the most interesting is William H. Prescott, whose accounts of Mexico and Peru are well known. It has been Prescott's misfortune that recent archaeological discoveries have invalidated the historicity of certain portions of his work. They still contain much that is valuable, however, and their charm as literature is undiminished. Of other historical writers, not mentioned in the *Introduction to American Literature* or in the list of Collateral Reading the following are worth noting: Benson J. Lossing (1813-1891), J. L. Motley (1814-1877), Justin Winsor (1831-1897), Henry Adams (1838-1918), James Schouler (1839-), George Bancroft (1800-1891), Henry Cabot Lodge (1850-), John Bach McMaster (1852-), Woodrow Wilson (1856-).

Since, then, the interest we take here in Parkman is broadly literary rather than strictly historical. *The Oregon Trail* has been assigned for reading instead of one of his more scholarly productions.

The Oregon Trail: Though this book is not one of Parkman's historical series, it possesses many of the same characteristics that one finds in his other works, particularly strict veracity and adherence to fact, description based on minute examination, vivid details, and an unerring sense of the picturesque. Notice too the genuine feeling for out-of-doors life, the delight in the vastness of natural surroundings, the prairies and the mountains.

The book brings you the genuine spirit of the primeval North-West that has appealed so strongly to the imaginative side of many. It gives an inspiration that neither novel, romance, nor poem can give you, an inspiration derived fundamentally from the fact that *The Oregon Trail* relates, with unusual insight, a real experience. You have here something more basic and elemental, and at the same time no less artistically written, than the other types of literature can give. Some of the early chroniclers dealt with similar material, but they had not the literary gift. Some of the later poets and novelists chose the same subject matter, but they lacked the personal experience. Cooper, it must be admitted, comes very close to the double ideal in such a book as *The Prairie*. In his *Tour of the Prairies*, Irving, more nearly than any of the rest, approaches the excellence of Parkman's account. The *Tour of the Prairies* deserves to be read more widely than it is; but it has not quite the dash and the vigor of *The Oregon Trail*. A later book that deserves mention here is '*Boots and Saddles*' by Elizabeth Custer (1844-19?) who tells the story of her life in the West with General Custer.

As Parkman's chief purpose in making his tour was to become intimately acquainted with the Indians, it is natural that his book should contain much about them. The frontier has been pushed back a long way from its original position, but there are still vast primitive stretches, and civilization has not yet spoiled the picturesque qualities of their native inhabitants. Pleasingly and entertainingly as Parkman has dealt with his material, he has rigorously abstained from exaggeration and touchings up. The author had the rare gift of making his reader feel personally acquainted with each of the characters, red, white, or mixed. You feel that you have actually known Shaw, Raymond, and Meme-Seela. The leave-taking from Gurney, Deslauriers, and particularly Chatillon, seems like a personal farewell. Do you not find yourself turning back to the preface, remembering that a later meeting with Chatillon is there briefly mentioned?

The permanent value of *The Oregon Trail*, then, is that it preserves an accurate picture of the hunters, the trappers, the guides, the settlers, the Indians, the buffaloes, and the unclassifiable residuum of those who contributed to one of the most picturesque phases of our national development, a life that is gone forever except as it lives forever in such a book as this.

Parkman's Americanism: As a man Parkman displayed precisely those traits of resolve and indomitable will that in others made possible the conflicts about which he wrote. The true spirit of the pioneer was his. He is also another of those who revealed to the later Nineteenth Century the life from which their own had sprung. He was not the first American historian, but, of all, the most likely to endure.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Parkman's life.

2. What handicaps had Parkman in his work?
3. What had he that made his work possible?
4. To what extent may his life be regarded as one of satisfied ambition? Explain.
5. How does Parkman rank as an historian?
6. How did Parkman come to write *The Oregon Trail*?
7. *The Oregon Trail* is not, strictly, a work of history. What then, is its historical value?
8. What is its relation to his other works?
9. What period of national development does it represent?
10. In what year did the trip begin? Who was Parkman's companion?
11. Who was *Chatillon*? Write a brief character sketch of him.
12. Who was *Deslauriers*? Write a brief character sketch of him.
13. Who was *Raymond*? Write a brief character sketch of him.
14. Write a character sketch of *Tête-Rouge*.
15. Write a paragraph on buffalo hunting, based on *The Oregon Trail*.
16. Write a paragraph on Indian life, based on *The Oregon Trail*.
17. What was Parkman's personal feeling towards the Indians?
18. What impression of Indian bravery do you get from this book?
19. Select a humorous incident from *The Oregon Trail*. Narrate it in your own words.
20. Select passages illustrative of Parkman's love for nature.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Write your impression, derived from *The Oregon Trail*, of the domestic life of the Indians.
2. Write your impression, derived from *The Oregon Trail*, of the Indians as hunters and warriors.
3. Explain the duties of the Guide, and tell what characteristics such a man would need to possess.
4. Comment upon the feeling for nature in *The Oregon Trail*.
5. Do you consider that this book has a message for Americans of the Twentieth Century apart from its mere interest as a narrative? Explain.

ASSIGNMENT XII

Daniel Webster and Abraham Lincoln

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. XVI.
2. *The Hayne-Webster Debate* (entire)
3. *Lincoln's Addresses and Letters*—pp. 9-18, 67-77, 112-136, 138-158, 184-189, 201, 214-223.

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Works by Webster and Lincoln:
 Webster's *First Bunker Hill Oration* (Riverside Literature Series)
 Other speeches by Webster are recommended elsewhere in the Syllabus.
 Portions of *Lincoln's Addresses and Letters* not assigned for required reading.
2. Other American Orators:
Early American Orations (Macmillan Pocket Classics)
Southern Orators (Macmillan Pocket Classics)

3. Fiction of the Civil War Period:
 - Uncle Tom's Cabin* H. B. Stowe
 - The Man Without a Country* E. E. Hale
4. Accounts of Webster and Lincoln:
 - Life of Daniel Webster* G. T. Curtis
 - Daniel Webster* H. C. Lodge
 - Daniel Webster as Master of Prose Style* (In
American Literature and Other Papers) E. P. Whipple
 - A Discourse Commemorative of Daniel
Webster* Rufus Choate
 - The True Abraham Lincoln* W. E. Curtis
 - Abraham Lincoln, the Man of the People* Norman Hapgood
 - Abraham Lincoln, A History* J. G. Nicolay
and John Hay
 - Abraham Lincoln* Carl Schurtz
 - Life of Abraham Lincoln* I. M. Tarbell
5. Works Interpretive of the Civil War and the Period Preceding the War:
 - The Cotton Kingdom* W. E. Dodd
 - The Anti-Slavery Crusade* Jesse Macy
 - The Old South* T. N. Page
 - The Day of the Confederacy* N. W. Stephenson
 - The Civil War in America* B. J. Lossing
 - The Lost Cause* E. A. Pollard
 - The Sequel of Appomattox* W. L. Fleming
 - Southern Statesmen of the Old Régime* W. P. Trent
 - John C. Calhoun* H. Von Holst
 - The True Henry Clay* J. M. Rogers
 - The Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant* U. S. Grant
 - Personal Memoirs of P. H. Sheridan* P. H. Sheridan
 - Memoirs of W. T. Sherman* W. T. Sherman
 - Stonewall Jackson* J. E. Cooke
 - Life and Campaigns of Lee* E. A. Pollard
 - Narrative of Military Operations* J. E. Johnston
6. Fiction Interpreting the Period:
 - The Perfect Tribute* M. R. S. Andrews
 - The Long Roll* Mary Johnston
 - Westways* S. W. Mitchell

Suggested reading in English Literature: Speeches by John Bright;
Speeches by Macauley.

B

It is time to consider the literature of our country that was affected by the Civil War and its political antecedents. Of the writers we have so far discussed, Bryant, Emerson, Melville, and Parkman wrote both before and

after the War. Hawthorne and Thoreau lived to see the opening of the conflict, but died before its close. In the writings of Bryant, Emerson, and Melville we find not infrequent allusions to the slavery question and the war (in Melville, these are confined to his verse); but each of these authors is known primarily for work not connected with the political situation of the country.

Meanwhile, a man belonging to an earlier generation than any of these, Daniel Webster, had risen to prominence as an orator, and on his abilities as an orator rests his literary claim. It should be remembered that the differences between the North and the South did not rest solely on the question of slavery. There were many but slightly interested in this matter who were very vitally interested in the question of State's rights and deeply incensed by the Southern contention that when State and National interests conflicted, State interests were sovereign. To this latter class Daniel Webster belonged. He is to be considered as one of the most powerful spokesmen for the Northern cause, but not at all as one of the Abolitionist Party, which, as we have seen, drew largely from the ranks of the Transcendentalists. Pronouncing with determination the integrity of the Federal Government, and fulminating against those who were seeking its disruption, he was nevertheless willing to consider and to advocate compromise in the slavery issue. To the extreme abolitionists, this appeared to be disloyalty to his principles, but the modern tendency is to view it rather as adherence to the principle, much more dominant in his mind, of indestructible union.

The Hayne-Webster Debate: In order that you may understand this debate accurately, read first the editor's note on *The Occasion and the Event*. Then, as you read the two speeches, keep constantly in mind that what is before you was intended to reach the mind of the hearer through his ear, not that of the reader through his eye. Try to fancy the sound of the sentences, as you read. Perhaps by examining the picture at the front of the volume, you will be better able to imagine the occasion and to consider the speeches purely as specimens of oratory.

The Speech by Hayne: It is unlikely that this speech by Hayne would have survived any more than many other able Congressional addresses of this period, had his opponent not been Webster. Yet Hayne's speech is by no means without excellent qualities. Notice, in the first place, that he states his ideas and his arguments with the utmost clearness and simplicity. The directness with which he approaches his subject makes one believe in his sincerity whether or not one agrees with his contentions. There is a certain impetuosity behind his words, a certain eagerness for the fray that indicates more gallantry than discretion. Notice the intellectual tone of the speech and the indications of education and reading. Allusions and quotations abound.

The Speech by Webster: You feel at once as you begin this speech that it is by an older man. You feel that his zeal is more tempered by wisdom than

is Hayne's. In his whole speech a tone of easy confidence in himself is marked. Webster's speech, like Hayne's, reveals a scholarly background; but there are fewer quotations. Particularly is it noticeable that Webster rarely calls upon the opinions of others to prove his major contentions; he trusts instead to his own power as a thinker and as a speaker. Do you not find frequent sentences that you realize would be very effective when delivered by a great orator?

When we consider an oration as a piece of literature, we look for certain definite qualities. We require that the subject shall be of sufficient importance to claim our attention on its own merits. We require that the material be well ordered, that the oration possess structure. We are not satisfied unless it displays ability both to persuade and to convince. We wish the orator to be a master of rhetoric, to be able to use it at the proper time and to drop it at the proper time. We are reluctant to consider any oration as literature that does not, at least in passages, stir the imagination with great memories, ideas, or prophecies. For these elements, test the speeches of Hayne and Webster.

Of the numerous public speakers belonging to this period, three others whose names should be known to the student are Henry Clay (1777-1852), John C. Calhoun (1782-1850), who was president of the Senate at the time of the Hayne-Webster Debate, and an opponent of Webster's, and Edward Everett (1794-1865).

Abraham Lincoln: We shall deal here with Lincoln, not as a statesman, not as a patriot, but as a man of letters. The facts of his life are well known. His schooling was negligible, but his self-education was continuous and intensive. This, however, does not account for his literary skill. The self-educated man is often pompous and turgid in his speech and writing. Lincoln's outstanding characteristic as a writer is his simplicity, and his unerring sense for the right word. Most of the writings considered here are speeches; the rest are letters. Though he possessed literary power in high degree, he was but incidentally a literary man.

Other Writers of Civil War Period: We shall see in the assignments that follow that the New England poets wrote both controversial and patriotic verse inspired by the struggle between North and South. Before we turn to them, however, we must at least mention one book that played a large part in influencing public opinion, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1812-1896). As a novel, the book is neither better nor worse than many which have perished. It shows an amount of literary skill in both plot and characterization, and Topsy has become almost a national tradition. But had it not come when the time was ripe for it, it is doubtful whether its qualities would have made for greater permanence than that enjoyed by Mrs. Stowe's other works. Since it is what it is, it can never cease to be an important book in our national literature. Another work of fiction belonging to the period of the Civil War, and inspired by patriotic motives, is *The Man*

Without a Country by Edward Everett Hale (1822-1909). This short story has always remained one of the most popular American short stories. Of course, histories and personal narratives of the four years of conflict multiplied fast after the war was over. Many of these had temporary interest; others are permanently interesting historically; a few have enduring literary quality as well. The two volumes of *Memoirs* by Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885) are very readable, but have hardly brought their author literary fame. If the student would know more of this period, he is especially urged to read accounts representing both sides. See the Collateral Reading assignment.

The Americanism of the Period: Upon the different phases of Americanism produced in this period one could write at length, and say little not already known to every American schoolboy. The spirit of enterprise, the spirit of devotion, the spirit of moral courage as well as physical were given special opportunity to display themselves. What has not until recently been sufficiently stressed is that both sides in the conflict maintained equally the standards of Americanism, that both the opposing camps were descended alike from Valley Forge.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Webster's life.
2. What American political writers preceded Webster?
3. What public position did Webster fill?
4. How does Webster rank as an orator?
5. Make an outline of *The Occasion and the Event*. (Let each main topic represent a definite stage in the situation.)
6. Make a list of the chief contentions put forward by Hayne, and in a parallel column a summary of Webster's answers.
7. Explain the allusion to Banquo's ghost as made first by Hayne and taken up by Webster.
8. Make a brief of pages 43 to 52 (inclusive). Decide first what general conclusion Hayne wishes to establish in these pages. Take this as the "proposition" of your brief. Then select the main arguments by which he arrives at his conclusions, and use these as your major topics. As you supply the details, be sure that the logical relationship of parts is shown. (See *Foreword V*.)
9. Write a brief summary of Hayne's attack on Massachusetts.
10. Select two passages from Hayne's speech that have power to stir the imagination.
11. Note the rhetorical opening of Webster's speech. Is the figure he uses an apt one? Explain.
12. Is Webster's assertion in the second paragraph just?
13. Explain the idea in Webster's mind when he says, "In our contemplation, Carolina and Ohio are parts of the same country," (p. 141).
14. Summarize Webster's tribute to Massachusetts.
15. Write a paraphrase of the paragraph beginning on p. 178 and ending on p. 180.
16. Select several passages well adapted for oral delivery.
17. Memorize the concluding sentences of the speech, beginning with "While the Union lasts" (p. 216). Write this passage from memory.
18. Look up the facts of Lincoln's life in an encyclopedia. Make a chronological table of his life.
19. What handicaps did he have to overcome?
20. Tell the circumstances of his death.
21. Write a summary of *The "House Divided" Speech*.
22. What qualities make this speech convincing?
23. Write a brief of the *Speech at Cooper Institute*.
24. Reread the section of Washington's *Farewell Address* alluded to by Lincoln. Explain how Washington's words applied to the situation Lincoln was discussing.

25. Write a summary of the *First Inaugural Address*.
26. Memorize the concluding paragraph of this speech. Write it from memory.
27. The rhetoric of the *Gettysburg Address* is structural rather than decorative. Explain.
28. Explain the sentence, "But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate . . . this ground" (p. 202).
29. State Lincoln's views on reconstruction as indicated in his last public speech.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Write a brief but comprehensive summary of Hayne's speech.
2. Write a brief but comprehensive summary of Webster's speech.
3. Compare the speech of Hayne with that of Webster for (1) the power to convince, (2) the power to persuade, (3) the power to stir. Cite passages.
4. Comment upon the simplicity of Lincoln's style. Give illustrations from your readings.
5. From Hayne, Webster, and Lincoln, select passages that are rhetorical. Comment upon the use of rhetoric in all three men.

ASSIGNMENT XIII

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. X.
2. *Chief American Poets*, pp. 102-258.

Recommended Reading:

1. Works by Longfellow:

Tales of a Wayside Inn

The Golden Legend (See *Complete Poetical Works* for both)

Outre-Mer

2. Interpretive Writings:

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow I. W. Higginson

Poets of America E. C. Stedman

Longfellow's Country H. A. Clarke

On a Proper Estimate of Longfellow Lafcadio Hearn
(in *Interpretations of Literature*)

Suggested reading in English Literature: Selected Poems from Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Mrs. Browning, and the early poetry of Tennyson.

B

There has always been considerable difference of opinion regarding the value of Longfellow's poetical writings. That he has always been wonderfully popular in all English speaking lands is patent. Some see in his very popularity an evidence of superficiality. That his verse often contains beauty

of thought is undeniable; but it is equally undeniable that the thought is frequently commonplace. Sweetness his poetry undoubtedly possesses, but sweetness is as apt to cloy as to delight. He is not so artistic as Poe, but his mind is healthier. Poe, like Mrs. Ossoli, thought him imitative to the extent of plagiarism; but the highest originality is sometimes unconsciously imitative. So it goes. Every word in praise of Longfellow can be sneered down; every accusation brought against him can be turned to react upon the accuser. The fact is that Longfellow possessed gifts which make him valuable to some and worthless to others. Prof. Cairns is not far from the truth when he writes: "Few true-minded persons fail to find in Longfellow's poems something that appeals strongly to them in childhood and early youth; and fortunate are they to whom the same simple consolation and exhortation remains adequate throughout life." Let us not then bother particularly about Longfellow's ultimate value, but examine instead some of his poems, and see what qualities, good or inferior, they possess.

Evangeline: Read in the footnote how this poem came to be written. This is the first long narrative poem, in fact the first long poem of any sort in this course. Aside from length, such a poem differs materially from a lyric poem. It is evident, that an extended narrative poem cannot, like the lyric, be the expression of a *single* mood of personal emotion; no single emotional mood can be so long sustained. Furthermore, as Poe points out, the poem is too long to have throughout the same degree of intensity. It is necessary, then, that the narrative poem possess certain qualities which will hold the reader even where the intensity of the lines is at a low level. The narrative poet here borrows from the fictionist and introduces into his verses the elements of plot, characterization, and setting. Of course lyrics may have setting, and even, to some extent, characterization; but the sustained plot belongs exclusively to the narrative poem. In spirit, the narrative poem is generally much closer to the romance than to the novel. It aims at an imaginative picture rather than an accurate delineation. The action in a narrative poem must be such as to arouse sympathy and curiosity, but the element of curiosity may be very slight. The action must progress clearly, but it need not be rapid. It must never be confused, but it may stop by the way to enjoy the beauty of the scene. It may either lead to a crisis, as does a novel, or consist in a series of episodes, as does the sea tale. In other words, by having at his disposal both the essentials of fiction and the essentials of lyricism, the narrative poet can mix the two, within certain limits, as he pleases, provided the interest in the story is never really lost. If he is an artist, however, he will unite the two elements harmoniously; the combination should not result in heterogeneity.

In *Evangeline*, the reader is interested always in the action, the events, of the poem, often in its emotional intensity, and sometimes in the passages of beautiful description. Yet these three elements work together harmoniously, like the parts of a symphony, so to speak, into a pleasing total effect.

The Courtship of Miles Standish: Similar in many ways to *Evangeline* is this charming picture of early New England Life, in which Longfellow bids fair to rival Hawthorne on his own ground. Note, by comparison with the readings of the first assignment, how both these authors have used actual events and actual facts, but have added picturesqueness to the situations.

Hiawatha: Note that the meter differs from that of the two poems just discussed. This more primitive metrical form fits well with the subject matter of the poem. It also creates an effect of greater rapidity of action. Observe the skill with which Longfellow has introduced long Indian names into the short lines.

Paul Revere's Ride: This is the best known of the shorter narrative poems of Longfellow, short enough to possess the qualities of the lyric. It is dominated by a single emotional mood. Note the rapidity of some of the lines, suggesting by their sound the galloping of a horse.

A Psalm of Life: This poem illustrates as effectively as any both the excellence and the shortcomings of Longfellow as a lyric poet. The sentiment of the poem is simple, sincere, and spontaneous. Its conception of life is a beautiful one. On the other hand, it lacks originality, and particularly forcefulness. Its didacticism spoils it to many. To appreciate it, one must be in the mood for it; it is not strong enough to create the mood. From the literary point of view, it lacks perfection of form: the verse has singsong quality: the mixed metaphor of the seventh and the eighth stanzas has often been pointed out.

The Beleaguered City: The opening line of this poem indicates the source of much of what Longfellow wrote. It should always be remembered that he had steeped himself in the literature of the past, and that one of his purposes was to present this material in modern form.

The Slave's Dream: This is typical of the placidity of Longfellow's poems on slavery. Later on compare these with the poems of Whittier and Lowell on the same subject.

Longfellow's Americanism: Much of Longfellow's work consisted in translation; much of it that was original transmitted to Americans the spirit of the Old World literature. The question has been raised whether Longfellow did not have so thick an incrustation of European culture as to be negligible as an interpreter of Americanism. This view is one that is not hard to support; yet it fails to do justice to the man. In considering Longfellow, we must consider a phase of American life that had not until his time assumed large proportions. American scholarship was in its infancy. Emerson had proclaimed the American "intellectual Declaration of Independence," but his conception of the American scholar did not include relations with the scholarship of Europe or employment for our purposes of its stores of knowledge and tradition. Even before Emerson's address, Longfellow had been abroad, had saturated himself in the lore and the literature of Europe, and had succeeded Ticknor as Professor of Modern

Languages at Harvard. In bringing to America the scholarship of Europe, he was almost a pioneer. Irving had seen the literary value of Europe for Americans, but he contributed nothing to scholarship. George Ticknor (1791-1871), Longfellow's predecessor and author of a *History of Spanish Literature* had to some extent blazed the trail; but Longfellow's work overshadows Ticknor's, as, in another way, Lowell's work in the same field overshadows Longfellow's. The point to bear in mind is that this poet's accumulation of European culture by no means invalidates his claim to recognition as a significant American. With the possible exception of Irving's, his Americanism is the first to have the cosmopolitan quality.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Longfellow's life.
2. What were the circumstances of his boyhood?
3. What is Longfellow's place in American Scholarship?
4. Under what circumstances did his wife die?
5. Write a brief character sketch of Longfellow?
6. Tell briefly the origin of *Evangeline*.
7. Write a brief summary of *Evangeline*.
8. In what meter is the poem written? Is this effective for a narrative poem? Why?
9. Write a brief summary of *The Courtship of Miles Standish*.
10. Select several instances of good motivation in this poem.
11. Write a character sketch of John Alden.
12. Write a summary of *The Song of Hiawatha*.
13. What is the meter of *Hiawatha*? Is it effective for the purpose? Explain.
14. Longfellow's picture of Indian life and character is imaginative rather than realistic. Explain.
15. Under what six or seven headings might Longfellow's poems be grouped? (See questions on Bryant.)
16. Note the "moral" in the last stanza of *The Village Blacksmith*. Why would the poem be better without this?
17. Select several other instances from Longfellow's poetry of similar unnecessary didacticism.
18. Test the *Serenade* (p. 111) by Poe's definition of poetry.
19. Paraphrase the fourth section of *The Belfry of Bruges*.
20. To what extent is *The Building of the Ship* a patriotic poem?
21. Note in *My Lost Youth* Longfellow's recurrence to the theme of childhood. Name several other poems where the same theme occurs.
22. Paraphrase the sonnet on *Milton* (p. 246).
23. Explain the title *Morituri Salutamus*.
24. Write a summary of this poem.
25. *Morituri Salutamus* has a note of stronger virility than most of Longfellow's poems. Select several lines that illustrate this.
26. Is the poem optimistic or pessimistic? Select lines to support your answer.
27. Paraphrase ll. 272-285.
28. Name half a dozen poems that indicate Longfellow's familiarity with Europe and modern European literature.
29. Mention half a dozen poems that indicate Longfellow's fondness for and appreciation of his own country.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Comment upon Longfellow's tendency to moralize. Does this mar the enjoyment of the poems? What is the difference between an expressed and an implied moral? Which do you regard as the more artistic? Explain.
2. Longfellow's poetry has a cosmopolitan quality. Explain and illustrate.

3. Explain how *My Lost Youth* is a typical Longfellow poem as regards (1) subject matter, (2) underlying idea, (3) use of material from European literature, (4) reflection of New England life.

4. "Longfellow's character was one of great mildness, sweetness, and purity rather than of strength" (Cairns). Do his poems support this assertion? Explain and illustrate.

5. Do you enjoy Longfellow's poetry? Why, or why not? Give definite reasons and make specific references to his works?

ASSIGNMENT XIV

John Greenleaf Whittier

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. XI.

2. *Chief American Poets*, pp. 259-353.

Recommended Reading:

1. For further reading in Whittier's poetry, consult his *Complete Poetical Works*.

2. Interpretive Writings:

John Greenleaf Whittier G. R. Carpenter

Whittier-Land S. T. Pickard

William Lloyd Garrison, the Abolitionist A. H. Grimke

Suggested reading in English Literature: Poems by Wordsworth, Burns, A. H. Clough; Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*.

B

Of all the writers of poetry at this period, Whittier represents most faithfully the conscience of New England and the wave of indignant horror roused by the slavery issue. He has never attained the height of popularity that Longfellow reached; and he has never received the critical condemnation that has been poured upon the other poet. His range was much narrower than that of Longfellow, but it is generally felt that, within his limits, he sounded greater depths.

The Poems on Slavery: The sterner side of Whittier's nature is revealed in these poems, a sternness however which is based upon his sympathy for the oppressed. Note the sincerity and the depth of feeling in such poems as *To William Lloyd Garrison*, *Randolph of Roanoke*, and still more in *Expostulation*, *The Farewell*, and *The Christian Slave*. There are strength and virility behind the lines of *Massachusetts to Virginia*. Observe the almost passionate grief in *Ichabod*, a poem manifestly based on a misconception of Webster. *The Rendition* too is a powerful expression of intense feeling. Compare these poems with *The Slave's Dream* by Longfellow. Do you not detect the greatest difference in intensity between this and Whittier's poems?

Nature Poems: Whittier took delight in the natural beauties of New England scenery. Probably his best known poem is *Snow Bound*, full of

charming, simple images of wintry landscape. The utter simplicity of all of Whittier's work is noteworthy. His directness and lack of needless adornment suggest the similar quality of Lincoln's prose. *The Huskers*, *Summer by the Lakeside* and *April* are other good examples of his use of nature.

Poems of Simple Life: Man interested Whittier primarily, particularly the simple man of the soil. He has given us delightful pictures of the plain, unostentatious life of New England town and country. *The Barefoot Boy* is a well known example. To this category belongs *Telling the Bees*, a poem not easily surpassed for simple sincerity of feeling. *Maud Muller* is another example.

Anecdotal Poems: Notice how many of these poems deal with a personal anecdote. The poems in this group are often called ballads because they tell briefly a simple story in a simple metrical form. Characteristically, Whittier chooses not a well known celebrity, but a man or a woman whose name lives only in his poem. In humble people he found his literary inspiration. In his love for nature, he is like Bryant, as he is in his religious musings. But unlike Bryant's, his poems abound in personalities. *Skipper Ireson*, *Barclay of Ury*, *Barbara Frietchie*, *Abraham Davenport* are only a few of the numerous names that compose Whittier's gallery of portraits. Notice how each of these poems is truly lyrical in its development of a single mood. Whittier sometimes, like Longfellow, is too eager to point out the moral, too fond of the didactic element.

Literary Qualities of Whittier's Poems: Notice the simplicity of Whittier's meters to correspond with the simplicity of his language and his style. He attempts no intricate or labored effects; his method is always direct, and he attains thereby an undeniable charm. There is perhaps a wintry quality about his poetry, not at all connected with emotional coldness, but associated with the ruggedness of his nature.

Whittier's Americanism: More than any other author considered in this course, Whittier was sectional. Though he was not consciously narrow or intentionally partisan, his range was limited by the boundaries of New England. Many of the sterner qualities of the early New Englanders lived again in him. Both as a poet and as a man, he was strong, rugged, conscientious, religious, democratic, and idealistic. He is representative, too, of the intensity of feeling that characterized the period.

Because he reflected New England ideas and ideals so accurately, and because these have contributed in so large a measure to our national ideas and ideals, Whittier has often been called the most representatively American poet.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Whittier's life.
2. To what religious sect did he belong?
3. Of what did his formal education consist?

4. Whose writings influenced him in youth?
5. What was his attitude towards slavery?
6. Narrate an instance of his personal courage.
7. To what extent did he travel?
8. To what extent did he resemble Franklin? How were the two unlike?
9. Who was William Lloyd Garrison and how was Whittier associated with him?
10. State in a sentence the theme of *Expostulation*.
11. Write a summary of *Massachusetts to Virginia*.
12. What facts occasioned the writing of *The Christian Slave*?
13. In *The Pine Tree* note the homely but effective figure, "Weighed against your lying ledgers must our manhood kick the beam?" Select other lines containing similar figures.
14. Paraphrase *Proem* (p. 280).
15. Whittier believed in the nobility of labor. What poems develop this idea? Do you find the same idea in Longfellow? Cite examples.
16. Write a summary of *Barbara Fritchie*.
17. The power of this poem lies in its simplicity. Name half a dozen other poems by Whittier of which this can be said.
18. Paraphrase *A Mystery* (p. 341).
19. Tell in your own words the story of any one of the anecdotal poems.
20. Select from the poems a dozen passages illustrative of Whittier's fondness for nature.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Compare Longfellow and Whittier (1) for range of interests, (2) for depth of feeling. Illustrate from the poems you have read.
2. What qualities of subject matter, style, form, and didacticism do you find in Whittier's anecdotal poems?
3. Do you consider *Snow Bound* a nature poem or a poem on man, or does it combine the two? Explain.
4. Which of the Slavery Poems strikes you as being the most powerful? Explain. Paraphrase it.
5. What religious qualities do you find in Whittier. Cite specific passages.

ASSIGNMENT XV

James Russell Lowell

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. XIV.
2. *Chief American Poets*, pp. 410-530.
3. *Chief American Prose Writers*, pp. 495-568.

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Works by Lowell:

Further reading in the *Complete Poetical Works of Lowell*.

Books and Libraries (Riverside Literature Series).

Critical Essays on *Chaucer*, *Spenser*, and *Dryden*.

On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners.

The Place of the Independent in Politics.

2. Interpretive Works:

James Russell Lowell H. E. Scudder

<i>James Russell Lowell and His Friends</i>	E. E. Hale
<i>James Russell Lowell, An Address</i>	G. W. Curtis

Suggested Reading in English Literature: Selections from the later poems of Tennyson; selected essays and addresses by Matthew Arnold.

B

Lowell has sometimes been called the greatest American man of letters; more frequently he is referred to as the most representative "all round" man of letters that America has produced. Readers of today are inclined to rate him a little less highly than did his contemporaries. There is much in Lowell's poetry and much in his prose that is valuable and permanent; there is also an element of the commonplace in some of his writings, and an occasional inclination towards freakishness that must be considered in making the final reckoning. The charm of the man, his keen intellectuality, his sense of humor, his ripe culture are characteristics that no student of his works can fail to observe. Like Longfellow, he was an interpreter of European lore and literature to Americans. He was more versatile than Longfellow, had more lines of interest, was somewhat more robust, and—an item of particular significance—mixed much more in public affairs. As much as any other American poet, he was an apostle of beauty; he was capable of intense poetic feeling; and he was a skilled metrist. Yet he rarely soars to the height of genius. His art is not perfect; he has given us some tasteless figures (see, for example, p. 456, ll. 225-228). As a prose writer, he has a pleasing style, a faculty for humorous expression, and generally a knack for saying the right thing. Yet here again we may search long before discovering an essay or a sentence that we should label work of genius. It would not be easy to find many authors that surpass him; those who equal him are numerous. One defect apparent in his poetry and prose alike is a tendency towards wordiness. He did not always know when to stop.

Lowell's Poetry: As general qualities of Lowell's poetry, notice skill in a variety of rhythmical effects, ability to create beautiful pictures in words and power to stimulate thought. In these qualities he has sometimes justly been compared with Tennyson, who, however, was the greater poet. The beauty of his expression has been traced to Keats, whom he keenly admired.

The Biglow Papers, First Series: Poetry inspired by the "Mexican Situation" is bound to strike a responsive chord in the breast of the modern reader. It speaks well for Lowell's talent that these verses can be read with pleasure today. Political verse is not apt to survive its decade. Birdofredum Sawin, however, lingers, in your memory as a real character. The poems form at once a psychological study and a criticism of current topics. There is a true vein of humor here, quite independent of the misspelled words, which so many American humorists have thought necessary to their effects.

The Biglow Papers, Second Series: These poems have more depth of feeling than those in the first series. They follow the same method, reveal the same shrewdness of observation, sparkle with the same humor; but it is evident that they are occasioned by a more serious crisis. Notice in particular *Jonathan to John*.

A Fable for Critics: Again we find Lowell in a humorous vein. As compared with the poem of the *Biglow Papers*, this work is more clever but less shrewd. Beneath the humor of his political poems, there was seriousness. In *The Fable for Critics*, we find it impossible to take the author really seriously. We enjoy his joke; but it remains a joke. This does not mean that the poem has not some very pertinent criticisms, but we feel that Lowell was less interested in what he said than in how he said it.

The Vision of Sir Launfal: One of Lowell's best known works. It would be interesting as an American version of the Arthurian story if for no other reason. The poem is full of exquisite nature images. Note in particular the "Prelude to Part Second." Observe, too, the beautiful metrical effects. That Lowell was a thorough New Englander in spirit is again illustrated by his insistence upon the moral in his treatment of this legend.

The Commemoration Ode (p. 490): The beauty of thought, language, and meter is too obvious to require comment. Without moralizing, the poem is full of high moral sentiment. It would be the sort of poem to inspire many, but for the fact that it is a little too intellectual in tone and treatment to have a wide popularity. A certain caviare quality in more than one of Lowell's poems separates him from the masses. Notice the sincere, dignified tribute to Lincoln. The *Ode* is a poem that will repay careful study.

Lowell's Prose: As general qualities of Lowell's prose, notice the clarity of his style, again the intellectual quality of his essays, and a discursiveness of manner, a lack of conciseness.

Lowell's Americanism: Lowell's chief contribution to the Americanism of his day was his constant and effective appeal to the best that was in the national character. The idealism of his nature was at the same time practical enough to communicate itself to others. He inspired his readers and his hearers to develop the best that was in them and in their country. He was more fitted to this task than was Whittier because his sympathies and his experiences were broader; more than Longfellow because his nature was more robust; less than either in so far as his intellectualism prevented popularity in the widest sense.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Lowell's life.
2. What was the extent of Lowell's education?
3. How did Lowell become interested in the slavery question?
4. To what extent was Lowell's life public?
5. What were the circumstances of his last years?

6. What is the lesson of *Columbus*?
7. Note the solemn, impressive meter of *The Present Crisis*. Select half a dozen lines that have power to sway. Compare the poem for intensity of feeling with poems on similar subjects by Longfellow and Whittier.
8. Explain the sentence, "The hooting mobs of yesterday in silent awe return to glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn."
9. The charming images in *An Indian Summer Reverie*, the appeal to the senses through the sense of beauty, suggest the poetry of Keats. Select half a dozen effective images from the poem.
10. Tell briefly the historical background of *The Biglow Papers* (1st. Series).
11. Paraphrase *What Mr. Robinson Thinks*.
12. What class of people does Lowell satirize in *The Pious Editor's Creed*?
13. Tell in a few sentences the general plan of *A Fable for Critics*.
14. Explain the assertion that Emerson had "a Greek head on right Yankee shoulders" (p. 443).
15. Select two effective puns from ll. 181-193 (p. 444).
16. Summarize Lowell's estimate of Whittier.
17. Paraphrase Lowell's characterization of Hawthorne in ll. 316-321.
18. Whom does Miranda in the poem represent? Briefly summarize Lowell's account of her.
19. Write a brief summary of *The Vision of Sir Launfal*.
20. Explain the line, "For a cap and bells our lives we pay" (p. 453).
21. What is the moral of this poem?
22. Tell briefly the historical background of *The Biglow Papers* (2nd Series).
23. Briefly summarize the discussion between the Bridge and the Monument in *Mason and Slidell*.
24. Which number of *The Biglow Papers* do you regard as the strongest? Why?
25. To whom is tribute paid in the *Commemoration Ode* (p. 490)?
26. Explain the sentence, "No age was e'er degenerate unless men held it at too cheap a rate" (p. 491).
27. State briefly the American ideal underlying the *Three Memorial Poems*.
28. The intellectual quality of these poems limits their audience to some extent. What passages best illustrate this quality?
29. Make an outline of *Emerson the Lecturer*.
30. How did Emerson's character contradict some popular notions about Americans?
31. Write a brief summary of *Thoreau*.
32. Explain the sentence, "The radical vice of his theory of life was that he confounded physical with spiritual remoteness from man" (p. 523).
33. Explain the sentence, "Thoreau's experiment actually presupposed all that complicated civilization which it theoretically abjured" (p. 527).
34. Lowell implies that Thoreau shirked responsibility. Comment on this opinion.
35. *Dante* represents Lowell as a scholar and a critic. Notice the intellectual, yet personal and appreciative tone of the paper. Write a brief summary of this essay.
36. Make an outline of *Democracy*. (Do not try to put in every detail, but show clearly the structure of the piece, and indicate the important points.)
37. This essay is rather wordy. Indicate several passages that might easily be condensed without loss.
38. Select several instances of humor in *Democracy*.
39. Explain the sentence, "Perhaps the best forcing-house of robust individuality would be where public opinion is inclined to be most overbearing" (p. 564).
40. State in your own words Lowell's conception of democracy.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Do you think that Lowell in his *Fable for Critics* gives a just estimate of the authors whom you have studied in this course? In the case of each, state Lowell's view, your opinion of his view, and the reason for your opinion.
2. Put into your own words the ideals indicated in the *Commemoration Ode*. Comment on these ideals.
3. Comment upon both the humor and the seriousness of the *Biglow Papers*. Cite specific passages.
4. What traits of character and personality do you find in the extracts from Lowell's letters?
5. Summarize the essay on *Emerson*. Tell why you agree or why you disagree with Lowell's estimate.

ASSIGNMENT XVI

Oliver Wendell Holmes

A

Required Reading

1. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. XII.
2. *Chief American Poets*, pp. 355-408.
3. *Chief American Prose Writers*, pp. 569-619.

Recommended Collateral Reading

1. Books by Holmes:

The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table

(Only a portion is in the required reading)

The Professor at the Breakfast Table

Elsie Venner

Our Hundred Days in Europe

2. Books by Other American Writers:

Their Pilgrimage Charles D. Warner

Our Best Society George W. Curtis

American Familiar Verse edited by Brander Matthews

3. Interpretive Writings:

Life and Letters of Oliver Wendell Holmes J. T. Morse

My Own Story J. T. Trowbridge

Suggested Reading in English Literature: Poems by W. M. Praed, Frederick Locker-Lampson, and Austin Dobson.

B

After reading for some time in the works of Whittier and Lowell, one feels in approaching Holmes that one is descending from the heights. The intense feeling of the Quaker writer and the comprehensive breadth of Lowell are not matched by their contemporary poet and essayist. Yet, though we place Holmes on a somewhat lower level, we are much more apt to read him in our leisure moments. Where Whittier moves and Lowell inspires us, Holmes stimulates us; and is it not often stimulation that we crave? In studying Holmes' work, we shall consider a kind of poetry that we have not so far mentioned—"occasional verse"; and a kind of prose that we have not so far mentioned—the essay of social criticism.

Holmes' Poetry: Occasional verse is verse written for a special and not too serious an occasion; familiar verse is verse written with grace, polish, and not too much seriousness. The two forms are very similar, and often a single poem represents at once both types. In his *Introduction to American*

Familiar Verse, Prof. Matthews names brevity, brilliancy, and buoyancy as the requisites of this type of poetical expression.

These three qualities we find well developed in the poetry of Holmes, brilliancy often taking the form of the keenest wit. As poetry, familiar verse is generally ranked lower than most of the other forms; but the genuine pleasure that it is capable of giving makes its place, even if a minor place, secure. Unless possessed of somewhat unusual attributes, occasional verse is not apt to be permanent in its interest; it exists chiefly for the occasion. Some of Holmes' poetry suffers in this manner, but much of it contains other characteristics which have kept it alive.

It will be observed that there is not a great variety of subjects in Holmes' poems; yet their never-failing vivacity rescues them from monotony. We do not regard them as great poetry; but are they not thoroughly delightful?

Holmes' Prose: If as a poet Holmes is a poet of society, he is equally, in prose, an essayist of society. Though he wrote novels, medical essays, biographies, and travel sketches, he is and always will be known primarily as the author of *The Autocrat*.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table: We find in this collection of essays the same sparkle, the same felicity of expression, the same "occasional" quality that we found in his verse. We feel more that we are listening to delightful conversation than reading a book. Holmes' intimacy is an outstanding characteristic in both prose and poetry. Notice that he is never wordy, never tiresome. It would have been impossible for the genial Doctor to be a bore. He had an instinctive sense of proportion, which combined with grace of expression and humor, makes his essays the pleasantest of reading. It has been pointed out, and justly, that Holmes lacks depth of feeling. But do you not feel that New England has contributed enough of a solid, serious nature to American Literature to be allowed the luxury of one Holmes? It would be a mistake to feel that this lack of intensity results in shallowness or superficiality. Holmes was a keen observer and a keen appraiser of men and manners. Man, society, interested him far more than did nature. In this sense, he was truly humanistic. The result of his observation appears in his writings in the form of urbane criticism, none the less searching on account of its polished exterior.

Holmes was by far the most noteworthy of a group of essayists who chose criticism of society as their special field. None of the others approximated Holmes in intellectual acumen, wit, or graciousness. Two who should not be entirely overlooked are George William Curtis (mentioned in the section on Irving) whose *Our Best Society* is a clever sketch of New York's *nouveaux riches*, and Charles Dudley Warner (mentioned in the section on Thoreau), whose *Their Pilgrimage*, though essentially an account of travels, brings in much pertinent comment upon American manners and modes of life.

Holmes' Americanism: Holmes represents a sophisticated Americanism, a stage of our national development when self analysis and self criticism

were prominent. In an effete nation this tendency merges into artificiality, over-refinement, and morbidity. In a nation in which the vital force is still strong, self analysis discovers the remedy. The same holds true with individuals. That Holmes never ceased to be genial, democratic and cheerful is the proof of his strength as a man and as a writer.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Holmes' life.
2. What were the circumstances that led to the writing of *Old Ironsides*?
3. Literature was Holmes' avocation. What was his vocation?
4. To what extent did Holmes travel?
5. In what esteem was he held by his contemporaries?
6. Memorize *Old Ironsides*. Write it from memory.
7. Familiar verse should "carry a suggestion of the more serious aspects of life" (Matthews). Show how *My Aunt* does this.
8. Point out the elements of brevity, brilliancy, and buoyancy in *The Last Leaf*. Note that Major Melville, who inspired the poem, was a grandfather of Herman Melville, already considered in this course.
9. *The Chambered Nautilus* suggests that Holmes might have matched Longfellow and Whittier in the serious lyric. Paraphrase this poem. Memorize the last stanza.
10. Tell briefly the story of *The Deacon's Masterpiece*.
11. Summarize Holmes' opinion of American authors as given *At the Saturday Club*.
12. Mention half a dozen poems by Holmes in which humor and pathos are exquisitely blended.
13. Explain the reference to an interruption in the opening sentence of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*.
14. Explain what Holmes means by "a Society of Mutual Admiration."
15. Explain the sentence, "All generous minds have a horror of what are commonly called 'facts'" (p. 572).
16. How does Holmes regard puns?
17. Explain the sentence, "Insanity is often the logic of an accurate mind over-taxed" (p. 599).
18. Explain how six personalities are involved when John and Thomas are talking together. (See p. 607 ff.)
19. Explain the sentence, "The whole force of conversation depends on how much you can take for granted" (p. 615).
20. Write a character sketch of the Autocrat.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. What qualities of form, subject matter, and spirit do you find in Holmes' class poems? (The footnotes in *Chief American Poets* indicate which were the class poems.)
2. Compare Holmes' patriotic verse with that of Lowell, as regards purpose, intensity, and power to stir.
3. Do you enjoy "occasional verse" and "familiar verse"? Why, or why not? Be definite and specific in your answers.
4. Is *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* intellectually stimulating? Explain and illustrate.
5. Explain the statement that Holmes is a poet of society, an essayist of society. Give specific illustrations.

ASSIGNMENT XVII

Walt Whitman and Sidney Lanier

A

Required Reading in Whitman:

1. *Chief American Poets*, pp. 685-691, and pp. 532-609.

Recommended Collateral Reading in Whitman:

- 1. Works by Whitman:
Other portions of *Leaves of Grass*.
Democratic Vistas.
- 2. Interpretive Writings:
Walt Whitman R. M. Bucke
With Walt Whitman in Camden H. Traubel
Walt Whitman, A Study J. A. Symonds

Suggested Reading in English Literature: Browning's *Rabbi Ben Ezra* and *Epilogue to "Asolando."*

B

From the day his *Leaves of Grass* first appeared until the present day, Walt Whitman has been a storm center. He is held by some to be the poet most representative of America and Americanism; others maintain that he is the least representative. Much has been written about his use of free verse, both in praise and in censure. He brought serious condemnation upon himself by the emphasis upon sex in some of his poems, where he permits himself a frankness of expression never before tolerated in an Anglo-Saxon man of letters. His opponents can see no good in him; his admirers see no limits to his excellence.

A more moderate view than either of these refuses to regard either his frankness or his verse form as essential qualities of his work; it denies that the detection of a European rather than an American ideal in his democracy is the true key to his writing. It seeks him rather as a late representative of Transcendentalism, who takes for his dominating conception the natural good in man and the necessity for free individual development. The emphasis on man's physical side then becomes incidental; to localize his democratic standards becomes impossible; his use of the free verse form becomes merely the application of his ideal to art.

His poems must be read as symbolical poems. The "I" and the "me" are used in the sense of any individual, sometimes of Individuality; "America" is less the United States than the ideal democracy. He hoped in himself to attain his ideal man, in his country to see the attainment of the ideal state.

Song of Myself: Note how Whitman appears to identify himself with practically everything and everybody in the created universe. Does not this merely mean the recognition of something transcendent within every person, even every thing, that corresponds to the transcendent spark within him? This recognition does not imply that he is without a sense of values.

The Song of the Open Road: Observe the zest in life, in mere living, that this poem reflects. Does the poem not contain a grand conception of comradeship?

Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking: Can you recall reading anywhere a tenderer love lyric than that portion of the poem which is printed in italics? These lines alone would justify Whitman's claim to poetical greatness.

Pioneers! O Pioneers!: Whitman has here caught the true spirit of the early chroniclers, of Cooper's backwoodsmen, of Parkman. Note that the verse is not so "free" as elsewhere.

O Captain! My Captain!: None of the many dirges for Lincoln has deeper feeling or truer beauty than this.

Passage to India: We have here another indication of Whitman's connection with the Transcendentalists, practically all of whom were affected by East Indian Philosophy.

Whitman's Americanism: As has been indicated, Whitman thought not so much of a particular nation as of an ideal democracy. He saw in his own country the closest approach to his ideal; so to this ideal he gave the name America. To urge the realization of the ideal democracy was Whitman's constant task. Whether Whitman's conception disagreed with that held by our foremost statesmen and thinkers is really aside from the point. Along with this idealization of the situation, note the very concrete love that Whitman had for American landscape and American cities. His delight in the vastness of out-of-doors is typically American.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Whitman's life.
2. What were the circumstances of his boyhood and early manhood?
3. What part did he take in the Civil War?
4. In what esteem was Whitman held during his lifetime?
5. Practically all of Whitman's poems are in free verse. How does free verse differ from the ordinary forms?
6. Note the catalog form of *There Was a Child Went Forth*, a form that recurs frequently in Whitman's poetry. Explain the line, "The first object he looked upon, that object he became" (p. 532).
7. Paraphrase section 6 of *Song of Myself*. (See pp. 533-534).
8. Explain the line, "He most honors my style who learns under it to destroy the teacher" (p. 545).
9. Explain the line, "I teach straying from me, yet who can stray from me," (p. 545). Compare this line with the third stanza of Emerson's *Brahma*.
10. What is the underlying thought of *Song of the Open Road*?
11. Paraphrase *Poets to Come*.
12. Select lines from the Civil War poems that illustrate both the vigorous strength and the tenderness of Whitman.
13. Explain the sentence, "I lull nobody" (p. 580).
14. Memorize *O Captain! My Captain!* Write it from memory.
15. State in your own words Whitman's conception of Death as given in *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed*.
16. Paraphrase section 8 (p. 594) of *Passage to India*. What idea developed by Emerson do these lines suggest?
17. Give in your own words Whitman's vision of Americanism in *Thou Mother With Thy Equal Brood*.

A

Required Reading in Lanier:

1. *Chief American Poets*, pp. 691-695, and pp. 611-632.

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Writings by Lanier:

Further selections from his *Poems*
The Science of English Verse
Retrospects and Prospects

2. Other Southern Writers:

Uncle Remus: His Songs and Sayings J. C. Harris
Southern Life in Southern Literature M. G. Fulton (ed)

3. Interpretive Writings:

Sidney Lanier Edwin Mims
A Study of Lanier's Poems C. W. Kent
The New South Holland Thompson
(Soon to be published)

Suggested Reading in English Literature: Selected poems of Swinburne and O'Shaughnessey.

B

To understand and appreciate Lanier's verse one must remember that he sought to apply the laws and principles of music to poetry. He tried elaborate metrical combinations and endeavored by these and by skillful choice of words to obtain tonal effects. His poems have a distinct interest as experiments. In addition, his ability to create beautiful pictures and to produce beautiful word combinations is remarkable.

Lanier's Americanism: As a poet Lanier can scarcely be said to reflect any phase of Americanism. He was interested in poetical technique, not in the thought or the feeling of his verses. He was unaffected by the spirit of his times except to protest against their materialistic spirit. Since he was a Southerner, this seems a fitting place to mention a few of the Southern writers of recent date, whose work entitles them to more consideration than they have generally received.

John Esten Cooke (1830-1886): Novelist and poet. *The Virginia Comedians* is the best of his prose works.

Abram Joseph Ryan (1839-1886): Priest and Poet. His *The Conquered Banner* is well known.

Henry Timrod (1829-1867): Poet of considerable lyric power.

Paul Hamilton Hayne (1830-1886): Known as "The Laureate of the South."

Madison Julius Cawein (1865-1914): Poet of merit and popularity.

More important than any of these is Joel Chandler Harris (1848-1908), whose Uncle Remus stories have endeared him to children and adults in all parts of the country.

As writers of fiction of more familiar types George W. Cable (1844-), Thomas Nelson Page (1853-), James Lane Allen (1849-), and Mary Noailles Murfree (1850-) should be mentioned.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Lanier's life.
2. What part did he take in the Civil War?
3. Discuss the influence of music in his life.
4. What were the circumstances of the last years of his life?
5. In *The Symphony* Lanier has tried to produce the effects of an orchestra, the different instruments of which suggest different thoughts and feelings. Select passages that show realization of this endeavor.
6. Summarize Lanier's views on trade.
7. From the *Song of the Chattahoochee* select lines that suggest by their sound the sound of falling or rippling water.
8. Write a brief summary of *The Revenge of Hamish*.
9. Paraphrase *How Love Looked for Hell*.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. What impression of Walt Whitman as a man do you get from his poems?
2. Comment upon the spirit of comradeship in his work. Illustrate from his poems.
3. Explain what Democracy means to him. Cite passages.
4. Point out similarities between Emerson and Whitman. Cite passages.
5. Which of Lanier's poems do you like best? Point out specifically the qualities that make it enjoyable. (Discuss several of his poems if you prefer.)

ASSIGNMENT XVIII

Bret Harte and Mark Twain

A

Required Reading:

1. *Poems and Stories* Bret Harte
(Read entire volume including introduction)
2. *Introduction to American Literature*, Chap. XVII.
3. *Huckleberry Finn* Mark Twain

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Stories by Bret Harte:
Left Out on Lone Star Mountain
Miggles
Colonel Starbottle's Ward
Mrs. Skagg's Husbands
2. Works by Mark Twain:
Life on the Mississippi
Tom Sawyer
A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court
The Innocents Abroad
Puddin' Head Wilson

3. Interpretive Works:

<i>Life of Bret Harte</i>	H. C. Merwin
<i>The Forty-Niners</i>	S. E. White
<i>Mark Twain: A Biography</i>	A. B. Paine
<i>My Mark Twain</i>	W. D. Howells
<i>Artemus Ward</i>	D. G. Seitz

Suggested Reading in English Literature: Charles Reade's *It is Never Too Late to Mend* (for a picture of mining days in Australia); G. A. Birmingham's *Spanish Gold* and *Priscilla's Spies*; H. G. Wells' *Bealby*.

B

Neither of the authors considered in the last assignment was a New Englander; Whitman was a New Yorker, Lanier a Southerner. Of the two writers to whom we now turn, the first, though born in Albany represents the Far West in his writings; the second is of the Middle West. These facts are not without significance. They indicate that the literary dominance held so long by New England was at last over. No section of the country has filled the place thus left vacant. It would require courage to assert that New York is in 1920 the national literary center as it was just a century ago. It would require greater courage to make similar claims for any other sectional division. Rather, in the last thirty years of our history, each section of the country has made significant contributions to our literary development.

Bret Harte: Both as a poet and as a writer of short-stories Harte has won a well merited popularity. As a novelist he was decidedly less successful. He is the continuer, in a sense, of the frontier tradition in our national literature. He depicts the last phase of frontier life within our borders, when the pioneers had reached the Pacific. He is essentially the interpreter of the rough life of the mining days in California.

Harte's Poetry: Among the minor poets of America, Bret Harte takes high rank. Your selections include both war poems and poems of western life, the two fields in which he was most successful. In his verse you will notice, in addition to his sense of humor, metrical ability, and imaginative power.

Again the student is advised to familiarize himself with the work of more of our minor poets as represented in such a collection as *An American Anthology*, edited by Edmund C. Stedman (1833-1908) himself a poet of no little distinction. It is impossible here to give even an abbreviated list of recent minor poets of America. The two who would inevitably be prominent in such a list are Thomas B. Aldrich (1836-1907), known also for his stories, and James W. Riley (1853-1916) the popular poet of Indiana and the Middle West.

Harte's Short-Stories: It has often been pointed out that Dickens furnished Harte with a model and an inspiration for prose fiction. The differences between the two as regards form and subject matter are obvious enough; their resemblance is in their attitudes toward life. This attitude may be characterized broadly as sentimental. But this is a somewhat confusing word, as it may relate to either sentiment or sentimentality. Sentiment in literature may be defined as tenderness of feeling with an inclination to see good qualities in those ordinarily considered altogether unworthy. Sentimentality is extreme sentiment lacking logical balance; its tenderness tends to become lachrymose; it is apt to paint black white. Both Dickens and Harte are strong in sentiment; neither was able entirely to avoid sentimentality.

Harte's Americanism: Bret Harte's Americanism was almost wholly of the reflected sort. He has given us an unforgettable panoramic view of one of the picturesque phases of our national development. Like Parkman he shows us a life that is past and that can never exist again, but that has left its impress upon the nation.

Note: It may here be mentioned that after the frontier ceased to exist within our borders, there remained the Alaskan wilds. In this field, Jack London (1876-1916), and of authors still living, Rex Beach (1877-) have proved the inheritors of the pioneer tradition in American Literature.

Mark Twain: Though his serious work is coming more and more to be recognized as his more significant contribution to American Literature Samuel L. Clemens is still regarded as "the great American humorist." During the national period of our literature, at least, the element of humor has never been absent. It appears shrewdly in Franklin, whimsically in Irving, gently in Hawthorne, somewhat roughly in Melville, genially, sometimes brilliantly, in Lowell, sparkingly and crisply in Holmes, delicately in Harte. None of these, however, was known primarily as a humorist. Meanwhile there were also among our minor writers men who may without exaggeration be called professional humorists. Theirs was a less artistic sort of humor, relying for its effects largely on exaggeration and incongruity. With them sense of humor and sense of the ridiculous came to be synonymous. Two of this group should be at least mentioned here: Charles Farrar Browne, better known as Artemus Ward (1834-1867), and Davis Ross Locke, who used the pen name Petroleum V. Nasby (1833-1888). As has been indicated their humor was of the slap-stick, rollicking sort, tending constantly to caricature and delighting in grotesque misspellings, a tendency represented also by Lowell, though he avoids caricature. The works of Browne and Locke are deficient in intellectual quality, and their vogue has passed. The modern reader is apt to be more impressed by their lack of taste than by their genius.

Huckleberry Finn: In this book, Mark Twain shows himself the lineal descendant of the humorists we have just discussed. His humor is often

unrestrained, even coarse, and constantly exaggerates. The Duke and the Dauphin are undoubtedly caricatures. He often confuses the humorous with the merely ridiculous. But he possesses other qualities as well. He has the ability to create real characters; barring the two mentioned, all the important actors in "Huckleberry Finn" are sketched with masterly skill. "Huck" himself is a splendid piece of boy psychology, equalled perhaps but not superseded by the character studies of Booth Tarkington in our own day. Jim is an unforgettable figure; he is surely as real to the modern reader as is Uncle Tom. "Huck's" father, though more or less in background, furnishes another powerful bit of characterization. The plot of the story is not its important element. It cannot logically be classed as a *sea* tale, but as a river tale it shows many of the qualities belonging to that type of fiction. It is episodic rather than sustained or climactic in its interest. "Huck's" escape first interests us, then the Grangerford-Shepherdson feud, then the questionable enterprises of the Duke and the Dauphin, and last—and it must be confessed, least—the elaborate rescue of Jim. The most valuable element of the story is its background, the extensive picture of life along the mighty river, the people who inhabited the region, their manner of life, their manner of thought.

Note that there is a considerable element of seriousness in this work underneath the humor. "Huck's" naive musings imply a powerful arraignment of slavery. His relations with his father suggest a note of tragedy. The feud episode is altogether serious. The book inspires laughter, but it does not fail to inspire thought.

Mark Twain's Americanism: Mark Twain is thoroughly American in his enjoyment of a joke, his opposition to sham and fraud, his hatred of oppression and tyranny whether personal or national, his belief in the substantial qualities of common folk. In all his writings these ideas recur again and again.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of Harte's life.
2. What were the circumstances of his early life?
3. Tell about his editorial career at Eureka.
4. In what parts of the United States did he live?
5. Tell about his life abroad.
6. What mystery shrouds his later years?
7. Write a summary of *John Burns of Gettysburg*.
8. Select lines from *Plain Language from Truthful James* and *The Society upon the Stanislaus* illustrative of humor produced by understatement.
9. What is Harte's prophecy in *San Francisco*?
10. Paraphrase the last stanza of *Dickens in Camp*.
11. Note the lyric beauty of *The Mission Bells of Monterey* and *The Angelus*. Select several particularly effective lines.
12. What effect does the baby have upon the manner of life in Roaring Camp?
13. Write a summary of *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*. Note that a favorite theme with Harte is the influence of innocence upon hardened sophistication, which is never completely hardened.
14. Write brief character sketches of John Oakhurst, Mother Shipton, and Piney Woods.

15. Write a summary of *Tennessee's Partner*. Has this story sentiment? Has it sentimentality? Explain.
16. Explain the title, *The Iliad of Sandy Bar*.
17. Select passages illustrative of the primitiveness of the life described.
18. Is *The Iliad of Sandy Bar* technically a short-story? Establish your answer.
19. Make a chronological table of Mark Twain's life.
20. What were the circumstances of his boyhood and his young manhood?
21. To what extent did he travel?
22. With what financial misfortune did he meet, and what was its effect upon him?
23. What were the circumstances of his last years?
24. Write a brief summary of *Huckleberry Finn*.
25. What sort of man was Huck's father? What part does he play in the story?
26. Write a character sketch of Jim.
27. What was Mark Twain's attitude towards slavery? By what method does he indicate his views?
28. Write an account of the Grangerford-Shackleton feud.
29. Compare this feud with the Pyncheon-Maule feud in *The House of the Seven Gables*.
30. To what class of persons do the Duke and the Dauphin belong?
31. To what extent does Huck outwit them?
32. Huck is represented as a normal rather than an abnormally capable boy. Cite passages illustrating his cleverness and passages where his cleverness is insufficient.
33. Why is the rescue of Jim uninteresting on the whole?
34. Write a paragraph about life on the banks of the Mississippi as portrayed in *Huckleberry Finn*.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Does *The Outcasts of Poker Flat* contain sentiment or sentimentality or both? Support your answer by references to the story.
2. Write your impressions of California mining life, based on the stories of Bret Harte. Be definite.
3. Write on the subject of Mark Twain's democracy, basing your views on *Huckleberry Finn*. Give specific references.
4. Which do you consider the best drawn character of this book? Which do you consider the least convincing? Explain.
5. Compare the qualities of humor and seriousness in Bret Harte and Mark Twain. It has been said that Harte's humor consists of understatement, and Mark Twain's of overstatement. Do you agree? Give examples.

ASSIGNMENT XIX

O. Henry and Fictionists of the 20th Century

A

Required Reading: (First Read the Biographical Sketch in the Syllabus)

1. *The Four Million* O. Henry

Recommended Collateral Reading:

- I. Works by O. Henry:

The Voice of the City

Roads of Destiny

Cabbages and Kings

Options

2. Works by Other 20th Century Fictionists:

(This is not intended as a list of the *best* novels. Each of the twenty-seven books is worthy for one reason or another, but no comparison as to merit is implied between these and other books of recent years that have been omitted. Each of the authors in this list was alive at the beginning of the Twentieth Century, but few of the books were published during the last years of the Nineteenth. Other recent American novels are mentioned elsewhere in the Syllabus.)

- The Fair God* Lew Wallace (1827-1905)
The Circuit Rider Edward Eggleston (1837-1902)
Rudder Grange Frank Stockton (1834-1902)
(Read also this author's *The Lady or the Tiger*)
The Rise of Silas Lapham William D. Howells (1837-)
A Modern Instance William D. Howells
Daisy Miller Henry James (1843-1916)
The Princess Casmassima Henry James
The Grandissimes Geo. W. Cable (1844-)
The Choir Invisible James L. Allen (1849-)
In the Tennessee Mountains Mary N. Murfree (1850-)
(Pen name: Charles Egbert Craddock)
Vistas of New York Brander Matthews (1852-)
In Ole Virginia Thomas N. Page (1853-)
The White Sister F. Marion Crawford (1854-1909)
The Awakening of Helena Ritchie Margaret Deland (1857-)
Main Traveled Roads Hamlin Garland (1860-)
A New England Nun Mary E. W. Freeman (1862-)
Ethan Frome Edith Wharton (1862-)
The House of Mirth Edith Wharton
The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come
John Fox, Jr. (1863-)
Soldiers of Fortune Richard H. Davis (1864-1916)
Seventeen Booth Tarkington (1869-)
The Turmoil Booth Tarkington
To Have and to Hold Mary Johnston (1870-)
The Inside of the Cup Winston Churchill (1871-)
Virginia Ellen Glasgow (1874-)
The Call of the Wild Jack London (1876-1916)
White Fang Jack London

3. Interpretive Writings:

- O. Henry, A Biography* C. A. Smith
Criticism and Fiction W. D. Howells
Aspects of Fiction Brander Matthews

Suggested reading in English Literature: Stevenson's *New Arabian Nights*, Kipling's *The Day's Work*, Galsworthy's *The Dark Flower*, Arnold Bennett's *Buried Alive*, H. G. Wells' *Mr. Britling Sees It Through*.

B

Biographical Sketch of William Sydney Porter (O. Henry): A few years ago the story of O. Henry's life was first made known to the American people by Prof. C. Alphonso Smith. The following brief sketch is based on one of Prof. Smith's articles.

William Sydney Porter was born in Greensboro, N. C. on September 11, 1862, and died in New York City on June 5, 1910. Of his parents he always wrote with affection, and of the slow, quiet life of the Southern village he cherished happy memories. As a boy he was fond of rather aimless wandering over the countryside, his love of roaming being probably inherited from the grandfather who, in 1823, came to North Carolina from Connecticut, as the agent of a clock company. As a boy, O. Henry was shy and reserved in the presence of strangers. He received little formal education; he attended only one school, his aunt's; but he was ever a keen observer of men and things. For five years, as a young man, he served as clerk in his uncle's drug store. During this period he was in poor health and grew steadily weaker. In 1882, he accompanied some friends to Texas, where, for the next two years, he lived on a ranch and built up his constitution. At the end of this time, he took up residence in Austin, where he made his home until 1895. He was first employed in Austin as a book-keeper. Romance entered his life in 1887, when he eloped with Miss Athol Estes. His marriage was a very happy one; one child, Margaret Worth Porter, was born to them. In 1892, O. Henry became paying and receiving teller in the First National Bank of Austin, a position which he resigned in December 1894. Shortly before this he had become editor of a humorous weekly, *The Rolling Stone*, which ceased to appear after April 1895 having existed for just a year. He now prepared to take up work in Washington, but the illness of his wife (her malady was consumption) deterred him. He remained with her, and a little later, in 1895, moved to Houston, where he became associated with *The Houston Daily Post*, as cartoonist and writer.

In June 1896, he was summoned to Austin to stand trial for embezzlement of funds during his services in the First National Bank of that city. Had he stood trial at this time, he would undoubtedly have been acquitted. But unfortunately, after he had started, he suddenly changed his plans, fled to New Orleans, and from there sailed to Honduras, where he hoped to begin life anew. At the wharf, at the end of his voyage, he chanced to meet Al Jennings—a notorious train robber, and at that time a fugitive from justice—and his brother Frank; and the three made an extensive tour along the South American seaboard. The partnership dissolved on account of O. Henry's unwillingness to join them in a robbery.

During this period, he corresponded regularly with his wife. Early in 1897, learning that she had again fallen seriously ill, and was not likely to survive, he hastened back to the United States to face whatever was in store for him. He arrived in Austin on February 5, 1897. His actual trial was postponed until February 1898, and in the meantime, his wife died in July of the previous year. Though there is every reason to believe that O. Henry was quite innocent of the charges, and though at least one of them was by the date it mentioned, ridiculous, he was found guilty by the jury, his previous flight counting heavily against him in their minds.

On April 25, 1898, then, he entered the Ohio Penitentiary at Columbus, and left it on July 24, 1901, his term having been shortened from five years to three years and three months because of good conduct. His prison life saddened but did not embitter him, and to it we owe some of his best writings. As a result of his early drugstore experience, he was made drug clerk of the prison. He mixed little with the other prisoners, except with the Western outlaws, who seem to have appealed to him. His Central American acquaintance, Al Jennings, had been captured by the law, and was by chance sent to the Ohio Penitentiary also, and again met his former fellow-wanderer. During his spare moments, and often late at night, O. Henry wrote, for the first time assuming the pseudonym by which he is now universally known. Towards the end of his confinement, he was given a position in the Steward's office. All this time he was in regular correspondence with his daughter, but contrived to keep his whereabouts a secret from her.

After his release, he lived in New York from 1902 until his death, and few knew of the years that he had spent in prison. During this period he again married. He devoted most of his time to writing short stories, the material for which he derived from his own varied experiences and the experiences of those whom he had met. New York interested him intensely, and his most mature, and probably his most representative stories are about the metropolis and its inhabitants. Before his death, he saw himself one of the most popular American authors.

His collections of short stories are published under the following titles: *The Four Million*, *The Voice of the City*, *The Heart of the West*, *Roads of Destiny*, *Cabbages and Kings*, *Sixes and Sevens*, *Strictly Business*, *The Gentle Grafters*, *Whirligigs*, *Options*, *The Trimmed Lamp*, *Rolling Stones*. Recently a volume entitled *Waifs and Strays* has been published, containing hitherto uncollected material.

O. Henry as a Writer: O. Henry is today one of the most popular of American writers. During the decade since his death, his vogue has steadily increased. Editions of his writings have been frequent; daily newspapers have reprinted his stories; certain devotees of the screen probably fancy him a popular scenario writer. The reason for his vogue is not hard to find. His stories are brief and require little mental effort in reading. The business man can read one between dinner and starting for the theatre, or on Sunday

morning while he is waiting for the car to be brought around. The stories do not disturb the composure of his mind or his conscience; on the contrary they are apt to give him a comfortable feeling. They are modern in spirit; New York is not very different today from the New York which he writes of. Into his Western stories he similarly injects an up-to-date atmosphere. The modern business man and modern business methods have a place in his works. His style is snappy—never “highbrow.” Each of these qualities has its corresponding defect. The stories are often superficial; they reflect only the surface of the period they represent, and consequently lack the quality of permanence. When their up-to-date air ceases to be up-to-date, no small portion of their charm will be gone. The style is not only snappy, but flashy. Yet the best of O. Henry’s works possesses two qualities that will probably stand the test of years: the human touch in his stories and his ability to detect romance in the commonplace. The slang of *The Gentle Grafter* will possess little interest for the Twenty-First Century (is not the Twentieth Century cold to the slang of *Pickwick Papers*?); but the human appeal of *The Cop* and *The Anthem* will be a human appeal still. The glitter of *Tobin’s Palm* will quickly wear off (is it not already beginning to tarnish?); but in *The Skylight Room* there is a nugget of true ore. Some day an editor will select from the twelve books by O. Henry stories enough to fill a fairly fat volume, which he will entitle *The Best Stories of O. Henry*. If the editor is a man of taste, such a compilation seems fairly assured of permanence among the four million and the four hundred alike.

The Four Million: Note the simplicity of the plot element in all of these stories. You can easily reduce each plot to a single sentence. Some of the stories are little more than anecdotes, so slight is the action. Observe that the characterization is never elaborate, but that tiny suggestive touches make each character seem real. Furthermore, in character drawing, O. Henry believed that actions speak louder than words. The setting in any individual story is slight: local allusions are introduced incidentally. But in the whole collection of stories the author builds up a very definite psychological background. The reader comes to think of New York, as he did, as a city of infinite possibilities, where romance hides under the mask of the commonplace. “In the big city, the twin spirits, Romance and Adventure, are always abroad seeking worthy wooers.”

O. Henry’s Americanism: In his depiction of the flash and the glare of modern life, its frequent superficiality, and its commercialism, O. Henry reflects one phase of the spirit of his time. In his recognition of the more substantial human qualities beneath this specious, often meretricious, exterior, he has done a greater literary service. He has helped too to keep alive the spark of romance amid unromantic surroundings. In all these ways, however, he is representative of modern civilization, rather than of America in particular. His Americanism lies in his creation of distinctly American types in his short-stories, his interpretation of various phases of American

character, and his never failing spirit of democracy. No country but the United States could have produced him.

Other 20th Century Writers of Fiction: Twenty-two fiction writers of recent years, and twenty seven of their books, are listed at the head of this assignment. There is not room here to discuss their work in detail, nor is such discussion essential. We are not obliged to pass judgment on the permanent worth of authors who have recently died or who are still in our midst. The important point to keep in mind is not that this or that author is going to become a classic, but rather that so many writers of skill, and excellence belong to our own generation. A glance over the list makes us feel that American Literature is a very living thing.

It may not be amiss to point out that recent American fiction has taken three major lines of development: (1) the international story, showing the American in Europe, represented by Henry James and to some extent by Edith Wharton and Marion Crawford; (2) the sectional or local story, interpreting with local color the life and the people in the different sections of our land, represented by Mrs. Freeman, Eggleston, Page, and many others; (3) the realistic story, which attempts to give an almost photographic picture of life, in which nothing is exaggerated or dimmed by the imagination of the writer, where the process of selection and weeding out of material is minimized, and where crises are as infrequent as they are in actual existence. Of this group, Howells, "the dean of American letters," is the chief representative.

The Great American Novel is yet to be written. Tarkington has given us a picture of American life that reaches far beyond its setting in a Middle Western city; Churchill in a series of brilliant novels has interpreted many phases of modern American life; but no author has produced a comprehensively national novel. Can a country as vast as ours, and as diversified, be contained within the covers of a single book?

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Make a chronological table of O. Henry's life.
2. Upon what charge was he summoned to stand trial?
3. Tell about his association with Al Jennings.
4. Tell about his life in prison.
5. What were the circumstances of the last decade of his life?
6. How great is O. Henry's present popularity?
7. About what parts of the United States did he write?
8. Explain the title, *The Four Million*.
9. What conception of the author's democracy do you get from this title? Do the stories match its spirit?
10. The humor of *Tobini's Palm* is cheap and lacking in delicacy. It depends on caricature for its effects. Select sentences to illustrate these statements.
11. *The Gift of the Magi* is an example of the ironical story of cross purposes. What other stories in the volume belong to this class?
12. What connection is there between the ironical note in his stories and O. Henry's own life?
13. *The Skylight Room* is an example of the story of infinite possibilities. What other stories in *The Four Million* belong to this class?

14. Write a summary of *The Skylight Room*.
15. Write a summary of *The Cop and the Anthem*.
16. What fact of O. Henry's life fitted him to write such a story as *The Love Philtre of Ikey Schoenstein*?
17. *Springtime a la Carte* is an example of the story of coincidence. Do you feel that this story stretches the long arm of coincidence too far? Why?
18. Write a summary of *The Green Door*.
19. Is this a short-story according to the strict definition? Explain.
20. Is O. Henry optimistic or pessimistic? Cite passages.
21. Write a paragraph about New York, as represented in *The Four Million*.
22. Is O. Henry interested particularly in plot or in character? Cite stories or passages to support your answer.
23. Write a character sketch of the character who remains most worldly in your memory.
24. To what extent is O. Henry "light reading"? Explain.
25. To what extent is he a sound interpreter of life? Explain.

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. What are the elements that make some of O. Henry's stories of temporary rather than permanent interest? Illustrate from the stories in *The Four Million*.
2. What are the elements that make some of O. Henry's stories of permanent rather than temporary interest? Illustrate from the stories in *The Four Million*.
3. Which one of the stories in this volume do you like best? Summarize it, and explain why you like it.
4. Explain and illustrate, from *The Four Million*, O. Henry's idea that Romance is always lurking around the corner.
5. Are these stories short-stories in the technical sense? Explain and illustrate.

ASSIGNMENT XX

The Magazine in America. Conclusion

A

Required Reading:

1. *Introduction to American Literature*. Chaps. XVIII, XIX, and XX.
 2. *Atlantic Classics (Second Series)*
 3. A current number of *The Saturday Evening Post*.
 4. A current number of *Harper's Magazine*.
- (These two magazines are to be procured by the student.
They will be found in the periodical rooms of all libraries.)

Recommended Collateral Reading:

1. Magazine Literature.
Current numbers of the *Atlantic Monthly* and other standard magazines.
Atlantic Classics (First Series)
The Atlantic Monthly and Its Makers M. A. DeWolfe Howe
The Magazine in America Algernon Tassin
2. Recent Books of Biography and Reminiscence:
The Education of Henry Adams Henry Adams
Twenty Years at Hull House Jane Addams

<i>A Son of the Middle Border</i>	Hamlin Garland
<i>Literary Friends and Acquaintance</i>	W. D. Howells
<i>These Many Years</i>	Brander Matthews

3. Writings Interpretive of Contemporary America:

<i>The American Spirit in Education</i>	E. E. Slosson
(Soon to be published)	
<i>The American Spirit in Literature</i>	Bliss Perry
<i>The Cleveland Era</i>	H. J. Ford
<i>The Age of Invention</i>	A. S. Johnson
(Soon to be published)	
<i>The Railroad Builders</i>	John Moody
(Soon to be published)	
<i>The Age of Big Business</i>	B. J. Hendrick
<i>The Path of Empire</i>	C. R. Fish
<i>Theodore Roosevelt and His Times</i>	Harold Howland
(Soon to be published)	

B

From the earliest settlers in our country whose diaries and other writings have been preserved, we have traced the course of American Literature down to the present day. We have seen that three dominant motives of the writings of the Colonial Period—adventurousness, high moral purpose, and, to a lesser extent, the quest for beauty—have continued to be the three motives most constantly recurrent throughout the centuries that have followed. Other elements have of course entered as the result of the complexities of modern life and the broadening of human interests. Humor, which the early Colonists lacked or suppressed, has become a fourth equally important ingredient in our national literature. American Literature today continues to develop along these broad, healthy lines.

At this point the student will find it valuable to reread as a whole the *Introduction to American Literature*, or, better still, to read one of the other accounts mentioned in the Foreword.

A word in conclusion regarding the magazine in America and in American Literature. Before 1800, periodicals were common, both newspapers and magazines, and to some extent annual almanacs, of which *Poor Richard's* is of course the outstanding example. It is needless here to mention even the names of these forgotten publications. Shortly after the opening of the Nineteenth Century, Charles Brockden Brown was for five years editor of *The Literary Magazine and American Register*. In 1815, the *North American Review* was founded. It was for a considerable time the "vehicle of scholarly New England thought," as Prof. Wendell describes it, but later, with a change of management came a change of policy also, a broadening of its range of interests. Less scholarly, but still conservative and substantial it is one of

the important publications. Among its prominent editors were Richard H. Dana, Sr., and Edward Everett. We shall pass over several periodicals of minor importance to the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, founded in 1833, which, for the approximately thirty years of its existence, occupied a position of prominence, but has now practically passed into oblivion. In 1840 *The Dial*, already mentioned in the Syllabus, became under the editorship of Margaret Osseli, the official organ of Transcendentalism. It was discontinued in 1844 and should not be confused with the modern publication bearing the same name, founded in 1880. Already Poe had started his editorial career. His connection with the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1839 and 1840 and subsequently with *Graham's Magazine* after 1841, should be mentioned. *Harper's Magazine*, which is still published, started in 1850, *The Century* (originally *Scribner's Monthly*) in 1870, and *Scribner's Magazine* in 1887. In 1895, the first issue of *The Bookman* appeared, a magazine devoted almost wholly to books and their writers with an occasional serial story or the like. Meantime, what we may regard as the most important American magazine *The Atlantic Monthly*, had been started in 1857, and is still flourishing at the age of sixty-two. A dozen other magazines of nearly equal importance might, but for want of space be mentioned; of the lesser periodicals of the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries, the name is legion.

From the many magazines of contemporary significance and popularity, five are here selected for special consideration. Each of these has been a magazine of recognized importance for more than a generation, and can thus claim precedence in age where a claim to precedence in merit would be vigorously disputed by a number of periodicals of more recent growth and attainment.

The Saturday Evening Post: If numbers are significant, *The Saturday Evening Post*, which traces itself back to Benjamin Franklin, is the most popular magazine of today. Issued weekly at the price of five cents a copy, it exemplifies the fact that popular magazines are coming more and more to rely upon their advertisers rather than upon their readers for support. *The Saturday Evening Post*, while not claiming to be a "literary" publication, frequently offers fiction not lacking in excellence, stories of contemporary life and interest. Until recently they have been generally dominated by the modern conception of Success. Of late, a tendency to introduce a wider variety of subjects has been noticeable. Nearly every field of human endeavor has been represented in the fiction of recent numbers. The international story, among other types, has been represented. Humorous sketches are often included, and each number contains one or more serious articles upon current topics.

Harper's Magazine, The Century, Scribner's Magazine: These three publications, similar enough in aims and achievement to be considered together, are typical of the all-round magazine for the home. They offer fiction, often by the best living writers, personal or serious essays, illustrated travel ar-

ticles, notes on Art, verse, and a section devoted to humor. To some extent they favor the serial story. Booth Tarkington's *The Turmoil*, for example first appeared serially in *Harper's*, Roosevelt's *African Game Trails* in *Scribner's*.

The Atlantic Monthly: This magazine, founded in 1857, under the editorship of Lowell, and having among its early contributors Holmes, Longfellow, Whittier, Emerson, Hale, and Browning, has always been a distinctly literary magazine. Its contents include fiction, poetry, and articles of current interest. Particularly has it stressed the light, personal essay, well represented by Samuel McC. Crothers (1857-) and Agnes Repplier (1869-). Recently it has published in book form collections of its best essays and its best short stories under the titles of *Atlantic Classics* and *Atlantic Narratives*. Its published books contain other titles as well, of which one of the most recent is Howe's *The Atlantic Monthly and Its Makers*, a charming personal account of its editors and its contributors.

Atlantic Classics (2nd Series): As you read these essays, note their range of interest, their personal quality, and their literary excellence. Do you not think that, when from the recent numbers of a single magazine, a collection of this sort can be made, the fact speaks well for the present and future of American Literature?

Other Publications: There appears annually a volume edited by Edward O'Brien entitled *The Best Short Stories of 19—*. These stories are selected from the fiction magazines and form an up-to-date record of contemporary tendencies in story writing. Similar collections of magazine verse are published. *Some Imagist Poets, 19—* is one of the most interesting of these annual anthologies. Contemporary poetry may be further studied in *Poetry* (a magazine) and in J. B. Rittenhouse's *The Little Book of Modern Verse* and Mrs. W. Richards' *High Tide*. Poetry in America is felt by many to be entering a period of renaissance. Of what has recently been accomplished in this field, Amy Lowell's *Tendencies in Modern Poetry* furnishes an interesting account. It will be well to give some attention to the poetry of the next few years, as well as to the essays and the stories that multiply monthly.

C

NOTE BOOK MATERIAL

1. Write a summary of Chapter XX of the *Introduction*.
2. Consult the latest edition of *Who's Who in America* for facts concerning the writers represented in *Atlantic Classics*. Write in your notes any items of interest you find.
3. What part of the World does *Jungle Night* describe?
4. Select a passage that makes a particularly vivid impression. Retell it in your own words.
5. What was the Devil Baby supposed to be?
6. What phase of American life does Jane Addams' essay describe? What are some of the outstanding elements of this life?
7. Write a summary of *Every Man's Natural Desire to be Someone Else*.
8. What are the essential qualities of the Greek genius according to Chapman?

9. State in your own words what qualities a biography should possess, according to *Haunted Lives*.
10. Write a summary of *The Baptizing of the Baby*.
11. List the following facts regarding a copy of *The Saturday Evening Post*:
 - (a) Total number of pages.
 - (b) Number of pages of advertising.
 - (c) Number of stories—give titles and authors.
 - (d) Reputation of these authors.
 - (e) Characteristics of the stories, *i. e.*, locality of action; emphasis on plot, character, or setting; presence or absence of humor; relation to problems or movements of modern life; view of life presented; qualities of style.
 - (f) Number of special articles—give titles and authors.
 - (g) Range of interests represented by these.
 - (h) Number of editorials.
 - (i) Range of interests represented by these.
12. Make a similar list for a copy of *Harper's Magazine* substituting for (h) and (i) the following:
 - (h) The sort of material in *The Editor's Chair*.
 - (i) The sort of material in *The Editor's Drawer*.
 - (j) The purpose of *The Lion's Mouth*.
 - (k) The range of interests represented by *The Lion's Mouth*.
13. Write a paragraph of general estimate of *The Saturday Evening Post*.
14. Write a paragraph of general estimate of *Harper's Magazine*.
15. Who are the present editors of *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's Magazine*, and *The Saturday Evening Post*?

D

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Which of the essays in *Atlantic Classics* did you enjoy most? Explain why.
2. Which of the essays in *Atlantic Classics* did you enjoy least? Explain why.
3. Select passages from these essays that possess beauty of expression. Using these as illustrations, comment upon the literary merit of these essays.
4. To what class of readers would these essays appeal? Give definite reasons.
5. Compare *The Saturday Evening Post* with *Harper's Magazine* as regards (1) size, (2) contents, (3) literary value, (4) permanent interest.

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